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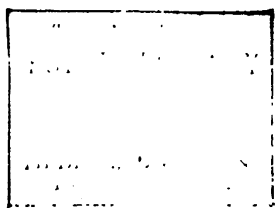

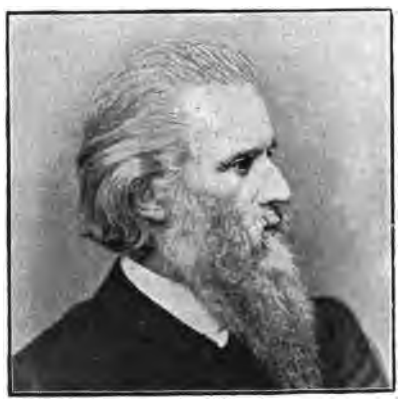

C. S. Percival.

POETIC PARALLELS

—AND—

SIMILES IN SONG.

BY

REV. C. S. PERCIVAL, PH. D.

"The fundamental fact in our metaphysical constitution is the correspondence of man to the world." * * * *

"The world is enlarged for us, not by new objects, but by finding more affinities and potencies in those we have."

EMERSON.

CLEVELAND, OHIO:
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PREFACE.

One of the principal offices of the poet is to exhibit the parallels which exist between the natural, moral, intellectual, social and spiritual worlds; and, by means of this exhibition, to impart profitable lessons to his fellow-men. For, as has been truly said, "men are but children of a larger growth;" and hence it follows that, like their younger prototypes, they can best be instructed by *object lessons*. If this book shall be recognized as a genuine fulfillment (though humble and imperfect) of this poetic office, I shall be content.

In point of sentiment, the volume presents, I think, a greater variety than usual, of pieces didactic, pathetic, humorous and satirical. But, in method of composition, every piece conforms to the title of the volume. That is, every piece either consists of two parallel thoughts, the first designed to illustrate the second, which embodies some truth in nature or art, in social life, in morals, patriotism or religion—or else it sets forth the truth with less regularity of method, but still under the form of comparison or allegory. All poets, of course, have written more or less in this mode of composition, which is a general favorite with

good writers and good readers; but this, so far as I know, is the first volume ever published consisting entirely of such pieces. Whether or not its novelty, in this respect, will have any tendency to popularize the work, remains to be determined.

To some of my readers it may seem strange that, in a book of poems by a clergyman, there should be so few of a distinctly religious character, and so many in a humorous or satirical vein. The fact is, however, that the most of the pieces were written before I became a clergyman, and before I expected to become one; which event did not occur till I was in my thirty-ninth year. But they were all written under the conscious recognition of the fact that every man is accountable to God for his words as well as for his deeds. Had I believed that anything herein has a tendency to encourage the neglect or disregard of religion in others, or to impair my own influence as a Christian man, it would certainly have been expunged. I am not in favor of obliterating the line which the Christian consciousness has drawn between the clerical and the laic; but I cannot help thinking that neither class is benefited by making that line too prominent. But humor and satire, divested of every element of grossness, have not, at least in modern times, been regarded as unbecoming in a clergyman. Some of the most distinguished humorists and satirists of England have been clergymen of unblemished character and undoubted usefulness. To forbid satire to the clergy would be, by a necessary inference,

to impeach the character of the prophet Elijah, and of our blessed Lord Himself.

Two or three of the poems, in the latter part of this volume, were written ten years before the late war, as satires upon those politicians of the South who were then agitating for a dissolution of the Union. But I was, at that time, myself a resident of the South, rejoicing in the sobriquet of "The Tennessee Poet." The pieces were printed in a Southern newspaper, and I expressed the sentiments of a large portion of the Southern people. I love the South, where I spent some of my happiest days, and I would not wantonly reprint anything that could give any of its people pain. But, thinking that history requires the preservation of whatever has been pronounced well-written in regard to individual and national experience during the troublesome times through which we have passed, I must let those poems remain.

Several pieces that have received the warm encomiums of friends who may be disappointed not to see them in the present volume, have been ruled out by the limitation explained above. Should this venture meet with a fair measure of success, the pieces referred to will probably appear in a subsequent volume.

C. S. PERCIVAL.

POETIC PARALLELS AND SIMILES IN SONG.

THE CORAL.

Low beneath the waves of ocean
Up the coral toileth slow,
Heeding not the wild commotion
Of his ceaseless ebb and flow:
Through the weary lapse of ages
Yieldeth never to despair,
Though the watery demon rages
'Twixt it and the realm of air.

Now above the deep uprearing,
Slow, majestical, its head,
Greeteth it the sunlight cheering;
O'er it dews of heaven are shed:

And the subject waves are bringing,
With a blind, submissive toil,
Earthy mold, which, closely clinging,
Turns the coral-reef to soil.

And it riseth high and higher
By the earthquake's hidden throe,
Still to heaven approaching nigher
From its watery gulf below:
Till, at last, a verdant island
Standeth in its beauty there,
Where, from valley and from highland,
Goeth up the voice of prayer.

. . . . .

Low beneath the sea of being
Toileth up the humble soul,
High its destiny decreeing
With a might that spurns control;—
'Mid the darkness thick enshrouding
Yieldeth not to coward fear,

Though an eager host is crowding
'Twixt it and the upper sphere.

Now above the mass arising,
Gleams the lightning of its eye,
All that haughty host surprising
Like the glance of destiny.
Lo! the subject hearts surrender
To its firm yet sweet control;
And their willing praises tender,
Urging on the victor soul.

And it riseth high and higher;
Naught its restless ardor tames;
Still to Heaven ascending nigher—
Heaven, the goal at which it aims:
Till, at length, its thrilling story
Men and angels glad rehearse,
And it stands the pride and glory
Of th' admiring universe.

. . . . .

Low beneath the sea of error
Up the truth is toiling slow,
Heeding not its waves of terror
Darkly surging to and fro:—
Through the lapse of ages weary,
Yieldeth never to despair;
Though a darkness, thick and dreary,
Shutteth out the upper air.

Now above the false uprearing
Slow its calm and radiant head,
Moral night is disappearing
Where its holy light is shed.
And the wrongs of former eras,
Vanquished by its heavenly light,
Bring, transformed, their old chimeras,
Handmaids now of truth and right.

And it riseth high and higher,
With each strife for liberty,

Still to Heaven ascending higher—
  Heaven, its summit's destiny:—
Till it stands a mountain hoary,
  Resting on foundations broad,
Over which a path of glory
  Leadeth earnest souls to God.

THE MISTLETOE.

When summer is green 'mid the shadowing trees,
Where fondly the mistletoe clings
The passer, mayhap, in the verdure ne'er sees
What they hide with their sheltering wings.
It may flourish unseen
'Mid the widespreading green
Of the fostering bough where it springs.

But autumn comes forth on his mission of death
To revel in summer's bright realm—
To scatter the leaves with his pitiless breath,
And the pride of the forest o'erwhelm.
Then the mistletoe green
In its beauty is seen
Clinging true to its desolate elm.

And then 'tis a joy in their beauty to see
Its tiny white blossoms appear,
Which ripen to fruit while the fostering tree
In winter is naked and sere.
Thus the mistletoe green,
In the summer unseen,
Findeth life in the death of the year.

And thus in a heart that is noble and true
The rarest of virtues may dwell,
In time of prosperity hid from the view
By that which adorneth it well.
They may flourish unseen
Like the mistletoe green
While summer is clothing the dell.

But when the chill winds of adversity blow
And the pleasure that earth can impart,
Like verdure autumnal is shrouded in woe;
Those virtues that never depart,
Like the mistletoe green
In the autumn are seen
Clinging true to that desolate heart.

Then Fortitude, Patience and Heavenly Faith
In lustre undying appear;
And life-giving Hope, sweetly smiling on Death,
Points up to a holier sphere.
Like the mistletoe green,
All their beauty is seen
When the winter of life draweth near.

THE MINER.

In the Yuba's yellow sand,
Delving with his spade in hand,
See the hardy miner stand.

With an unremitting toil,
Brings he, from the dusty soil,
Forth to light the shining spoil.

Heeds he not the heat or cold,
While, from out the earthy mold,
Still he sifts the sparkling gold.

Nor his labor doth he stint
Till the coiner, at the mint,
Doth the yellow mass imprint.

With the form the dies impress,
Faultless in its comeliness,
Forth it hies the earth to bless.

And it goes from hand to hand;
And it strays from land to land—
"Bless the world"—its great command.

To the rich man's lordly door,
To the cottage of the poor,
Brings it, aye, a friendly store.

Till its form, in youth complete,
Old become and obsolete,
Seems to modern eyes unmeet.

But the substance never dies;
Still, to all admiring eyes,
From it rays of beauty rise.

And the skillful minter then
Moulds and fashions it again
For another race of men.

Thus to future ages borne,
Of its beauty never shorn,
Never lost, forever worn—

Lo! the miner's work shall last,
And perform its mission vast,
When his soul from earth is past.

. . . . . .

Delving in the mine of wit,
Pen in hand and taper lit,
See the musing poet sit.

Seeking truth with patient toil,
Brings he, from the mental soil,
Forth to light the shining spoil.

Of his labor heeds he naught,
If, with heavenly beauty fraught,
He may cull the sparkling thought.

Nor from toiling doth he rest,
Till the printer's hand hath drest
Brilliant thoughts in fitting vest.

Then a book goes from the press,
Faultless in its comeliness,
Hying forth the earth to bless.

And it goes from hand to hand,
And it strays from land to land—
"Bless the world!"—its great command.

For the rich and for the poor,
For the polished and the boor,
It has heavenly gifts in store.

Till the words, once passing sweet,
Old become and obsolete,
Seem to modern ears unmeet.

But the spirit never dies:
Still, to all admiring eyes,
From it rays of beauty rise.

And the wise translator then
Moulds and fashions it again
For another race of men.

Thus to future ages borne,
Of its glory never shorn,
Never lost, forever worn—

Lo! the poet's work shall last,
And perform its mission vast,
When his soul from earth is past.

AUTUMN FLOWERS AND WINTER BIRDS.

There are flowers that bloom when, in sombre array,
The autumn is spreading its gloom;
And they trustingly smile o'er the face of decay,
Like affection and hope o'er the tomb.
In fragrance and beauty less sweet to the sense
These children of autumn may be,
Than the daughters of spring in their brightness intense,
With glory o'erspreading the lea.
But, oh! to the lonely and sorrowing earth
They are dearer than all that are gone;
For they bloom not a while in her season of mirth—
Then leave her to sorrow alone!

There are birds that remain when the winter is here,*
And the forest is dreary and lone;
And they sing 'mid the trees that are naked and sere,
With a trustful though sorrowful tone.

* See note I., p. 190.

In sweetness of song and in beauty of plume,
Perchance they may never compare
With warblers that only in sunshine and bloom
Breathe their notes on the midsummer air;
But, oh! to the lonely and desolate earth
They are dearer than all that are flown;
For they sing not a while in her season of mirth—
Then leave her to sorrow alone!

There are friends that remain in adversity's hour,
As fond as in days that are past;
And they lighten the griefs that around us may lower,
With sympathy true to the last.
Less brilliant and gay they perchance may be found,
Than some that were with us awhile,
To share in the pleasure and mirth that abound
Where fortune still comes with a smile.
But, oh! to our lonely and desolate hearts,
They are dearer than all that are gone;
For they come not to linger till fortune departs—
Then leave us to perish alone!

THE SINKING STREAMLET.*

Silver streamlet, hither gliding
With thy joyous tone,
Thou art nevermore abiding,
Gaily hurrying on—
Now along the meadow straying,
Now along the glade;
Sometimes with the sunshine playing,
Sometimes with the shade.

Thou hast sported with the flowers
On thy mossy brink.
Birds have left their shady bowers
From thy wave to drink;

*See note II., p. 190.

And their songs of joyous greeting
They have sung to thee,
While thy murmurs, oft repeating,
Mocked their minstrelsy.

Suddenly, alas! is ending
Here thy mimic play.
Downward thou art now descending
On an unknown way;
And thy voice of frolic gladness,
Changing now its tone,
Soundeth, in its wail of sadness,
Like a dying groan.

Dark and cavernous and dreary
Is that lonely grave,
Where no rays of sunlight cheery
Gild thy lurid wave—
Where no sound the silence breaketh,
Save thy hollow moan,
Which a dismal echo waketh
With its fearful tone.

Art thou not in terror shrinking
From its awful gloom,
Like a human creature sinking
To an early tomb?
Hark! me seems thy dying murmur
Gives a low reply:
May it make my spirit firmer
When I come to die!

"Mortal! brief shall be my dwelling
In that noisome grave;
For, a joyous fountain, welling
From my hidden cave,
I shall greet anew the morning
With a gladder song,
And a fairer land adorning
I shall rove along;

"Sporting with the fairy flowers
On my mossy brink,
And the birds that leave their bowers
From my wave to drink.

Dancing on with liquid motion,
I with joy shall come
To that bright and glorious ocean,
My eternal home."

THE REDBUD AND THE REDBIRD.

The redbud thicket by yonder stream
Shines forth with a roseate purple gleam;
As if from the sky at even
A sunset cloud had deserted the blue,
To join with the green its brighter hue
Brought down from the azure heaven.

And out and in, on his crimson wing,
With a note of love that he only can sing,
The redbird gaily is flitting;
As if a cluster of bloom from the tree
Had started to life and minstrelsy,
Its beauty to melody fitting.

Sweet tree—sweet bird! Such a pair, I ween,
In the month of beauty was never seen,
Nor heard in so sweet a duetto;
Where blossom and voice bear equal part,
And where each raptured, listening heart
May furnish its own libretto!

One sings in color, one blooms in song,
Both making sweet harmony all day long
In the pleasant vernal weather—
A charming music, or seen or heard;
For the redbud and the redbird
Ever blossom and sing together.

THE MOCKING BIRD AND THE POET.

He sitteth apart from the feathered throng
In the flush of the early year;
And he lists to the varied notes of song
From thicket and grove, as all day long
They fall on his ravished ear.

And the secret power of every tone
Sinks deep in his swelling heart;
And he makes the melody all his own,
With skill that is known to him alone
Its mystic sense to impart.

And when no more can his heart contain
Of the music he has heard,
The wondering songsters hear again
Their mingled notes of joy and pain
From the voice of the self-same bird.

The exulting scream of the tyrant hawk,
And his captor's shriek of pain;
And the eagle's cry from the lofty rock
He knows with startling power to mock,
In the notes of his wild refrain.

Then the lonely voice of the mourning dove
And the tones of the happy thrush,
And the humble sparrow's song of love
As he sits his feathery nest above,
From a heart o'erflowing gush.

And oft in the hush of the silent night
A solemn voice is heard,
And the startled sleepers wake in fright—
Then pause to list with a strange delight
To the wild magician bird.

While thus his melody floats along
Through the leafy solitudes,
Enrapturing all the listening throng—
O! what is he, with his magic song,
But the poet of the woods?

. . . . .

He dwells from the throng of men apart,
A man of thoughtful mood,
And he lists to the voice of the human heart,
From rural vale and crowded mart,
As it falls on his solitude.

And the thrilling power of every tone
Sinks deep in his swelling heart;
And he makes the meaning all his own,
With wondrous skill that is his alone
Its mystic sense to impart.

And when in accents sweet and clear
He singeth his magic verse,
The tribes of men all wondering hear
Their secret thoughts, their hope, their fear,
The self-same lips rehearse.

The lordly tyrant's words of scorn,
The captive's sigh of pain,
And the patriot hero's shout up-borne
With the trumpet notes of the warrior's horn
Are the notes of his varied strain.

Then the sorrowing mourner's plaintive moan,
And the lover's whispered word,
And the humble laborer's joyous tone
As he homeward hies when his task is done,
In measures sweet are heard.

And oft when the earth is hushed in sleep,
'Mid the shadows vague and dim,
His solemn thoughts their vigils keep—
And the startled world awakes to weep
Strange tears of joy with him.

While thus he sings in words of fire
By countless thousands heard;
While countless thousands, too, admire,
O! what is he with his sacred lyre,
But the human Mocking Bird?

HERCULES AND HYLAS.

[Affectionately inscribed to my young friend, T. H. E.]

Were I as much the stronger as the older,
Thou shouldst be Hylas and I Hercules—
Of grace and strength a union each beholder,
Man or immortal, would most surely please.

Together we would roam the groves of Hellas,
Charmed with their beauty and their melody;
Listening to what the storied founts might tell us,
And smiling on the nymphs who'd envy me.

I'd tell thee of the toils imposed by Juno,
Whose execution won me such renown;
And thou shouldst tell me such sweet tales as few know,
Of thy adventures where the sun goes down.

Each one by turns, the pupil and the teacher,
  Each other's lack we'd fondly supplement;
And thro' the teeming earth no living creature
  Our thirst for knowledge e'er should circumvent.

Now philosophic heights together soaring,
  We'd scale the mount of Heaven's high mysteries:
And now the secrets of the earth exploring,
  We'd sound the depths of scientific seas.

Then, seeking fame in deeds of high endeavor,
  We'd join the hunters of the Golden Fleece.
But, ah! to think that in that quest forever
  Our fond companionship on earth would cease!

For, kindly going to the Mysian fountains
  For drink, the weary sailors' thirst to allay,
The love-crazed nymphs, rushing from streams or mountains,
  Would seize and bear thee to their haunts away.

Then in distress, with faithful Polyphemus,
  I'd leave the Argo for a dearer quest:

Driven through all lands by one *amor supremus*,
Seeking thee ever and disdaining rest.

And when, all seas and rivers vainly sailing,
I saw thee not, and never more might see,
Naught but the pyre should drown my notes of wailing:
Tom, my sweet Hylas, O come back to me!

BUILDING THE CHURCH.

[Respectfully inscribed to two musically gifted Young Ladies, who were about to give a Series of Concerts to aid in the Erection of a Church Edifice.]

Grecian fable has told
How Amphion of old
Reared the walls of a city fair
By his lyre's sweet tones,
That aroused the stones
From the quarry, their ancient lair:

How, like living things,
To his sounding strings,
They danced thro' the charmèd air—
Leaped in joyous crowds

Toward the hovering clouds,
And stood in their beauty there.

No heathen town
Shall win its renown
From the walls that await your word;
But a Church of God
Shall arise from the sod,
By the breath of your music stirred.

Each note that you sing
A stone shall bring,
To the walls of the beautiful fane;
Till its spire points up,
With the finger of hope,
To the Heaven 'twill help to gain.

May the bell that shall pour
Its notes from the tower,
Long tell to the gathering throng,
Of the minstrel pair
That placed it there,
By the magic power of song.

And may you and they,
In an endless day,
With the saints from all the lands,
Unite in the song
Of that happier throng,
In the Temple not made with hands.

"THE OLD MOON IN THE NEW MOON'S ARMS."

The old moon, shadowy, faint and dim,
Lies in the new moon's arms:
The new moon, still but a glittering rim,
Spreadeth her infant charms.

The old moon, vanishing day by day,
Fades in the arms of the new:
The new moon, still with increasing ray,
Smiles to the raptured view.

Far more than the old moon was of yore,
Soon shall the new moon be;
And earth a glory ne'er seen before
Soon in her face shall see.

For the vanished moons of a thousand years,
Centered in her shall shine,
While her own pure ray than all appears
Brighter and more divine.

. . . . . .

Embracing the dim and shadowy past,
  Lieth the present age—
Lo! that is a volume vague and vast;
  This a half-written page.

Now slowly vanishing into night,
  Fadeth the past away:
The present still, with increasing light,
  Shines like the breaking day.

Far more than ever the past of yore,
  Soon shall the present be;
And earth a glory ne'er seen before
  Soon in its face shall see.

For the gathered light of the vanished years
  Centered in it shall shine,
While its own pure ray than all appears
  Brighter and more divine.

THE PYRAMID.

[To be read ascendingly, descendingly and condescendingly.]

There
For aye
To stay,
Commanding
'Tis standing,
With godlike air,
Divinely fair!
Its fame desiring,
Its height admiring,
Looks on it from afar
Lo! every smiling star.
To raise the pile to Heaven
These beauteous stones are given:
Each prayer for truth's inspiring light,
Each manly struggle for the right;
Each kindly word to cheer the lowly,
Each aspiration for the holy;
Each strong temptation nobly overcome,
Each clamorous passion held in silence dumb:
As slow it riseth toward the upper heaven
Stone after stone unto the mass is given.
Its base upon the earth, its apex in the skies,
The good man's character a pyramid doth rise.

THE DEPARTURE OF THE MARTINS.

Where are they now—those spirits light
That twittered 'neath our sunny eaves,
Oft glancing forth on pinions bright
As silver leaves?

Sudden they came, like vernal flowers,
All on a pleasant April day*—
Sudden from our still verdant bowers
They've passed away.

Gone ere the summer days are o'er!
Amid their sadly vacant cells
Their liquid notes are heard no more—
There silence dwells.

O lovers of the summer time!
Felt ye from far the coming breath
Which soon shall blast our fading clime
With lingering death?

*See note III., p. 190.

Then did ye haste your parting flight,
That ye might ne'er be doomed to see
Chill autumn shed his withering blight
O'er field and tree?

But, O! ye will return again,
When spring relumes the forest dell:
Till then, ye glittering ones, till then,
A sad farewell!

. . . . .

Where are they now—those visions bright
That clustered round my sunny way,
Filling my heart with fresh delight,
In life's young day?

They came like sunshine 'mid the flowers,
All in the pleasant month of May;
Now from my heart's still verdant bowers
They've passed away.

Gone ere my youthful days are o'er!
But they have left a sacred spell,
In whose sweet radiance evermore
Shall memory dwell.

Sweet visions of my youthful prime,
Felt ye from far th' approaching night
Which age shall throw o'er Fancy's clime,
With chilling blight?

Then did ye sadly haste away,
Lest, 'mid the darkness gathering o'er,
Your blessed light should fade away
To shine no more?

But, O! ye will revive again,
With youth renewed in Heaven to dwell:
Till then, ye glittering ones, till then,
A sad farewell!

THE RETURN OF THE MARTINS.

Welcome, ye spirits bright,
By April sunshine and by April showers,
Lured, in your annual flight,
To cheer again this northern home of ours.

Back from your southern home,
Where ye have lingered half your shining year,
On glittering wings ye come,
With light and song our summer brief to cheer.

As brilliant are the dyes
Which shine reflected from your glossy coats—
As soft mellifluous rise
And fall in melody your liquid notes,

As when, with brief farewells,
Ye left us sadly ere the summer leaves,
And vacant made the cells
Where now ye twitter 'neath our sunny eaves.

Then revel, while ye may,
In the glad sunshine of these vernal hours,
And cheer the summer day
With gladsome song amid the verdant bowers;

For soon, too soon, alas!
The shortening hours shall tell of coming blight—
The summer days shall pass,
And with them southward ye resume your flight.

. . . . . .

Welcome, ye visions bright,
By April showers and by April shine,
Lured in your devious flight
To cheer again this careworn heart of mine.

Back from your far-off home,
Where ye have lingered now for many a year,
On glittering wings ye come
With childhood's joy my manhood's lot to cheer.

As brilliant is the form
Which still in this your glad return ye wear—
As genial and as warm
The light with which ye gild the clouds of care;

As when, in manhood's morn,
To childhood's realm ye took your backward flight,
And left the heart forlorn
Which once again is radiant with your light.

Then linger, while ye may,
Like the glad sunshine of these pleasant hours;
And through this vernal day
To bless my heart conspire with birds and flowers;

For soon, too soon, alas!
Returning care shall haste your parting flight—
This vernal day shall pass
And with it homeward ye resume your flight.

THE LADDER.

[Affectionately inscribed to a little girl who has just learned the alphabet.]

A ladder, resting on the earth below,
And towering higher than the angels go,
Receives thy tiny footsteps, mounting slow.

Thy parents, but a little way ascended,
Stoop down to grasp thy eager hands extended:
Mount, darling, by our loving aid befriended!

To lead thee on with us to regions higher,
Our hearts with zeal unwonted doth inspire:
We feel the kindling of a new desire!

A proud incentive, never felt before,
Impels us up the lofty steep to soar—
To lead thee with us, climbing evermore!

Short is that portion which in time we see:
Beyond, still pointing up eternally,
It rests upon the throne of Deity.

Toilsome and dark thy way may often prove,
Which up thro' time ascends; but heavenly love
Will bring you light and courage from above.

And then, full oft, the holy bliss of knowing,
While earth beneath us less and less is growing,
Shall fill our grateful hearts to overflowing.

And when, beyond the narrow bounds of time,
We soar and mount the sacred height sublime,
Ecstatic joy shall swell our choral rhyme.

There, unincumbered by our earthly clod,
In that bright realm by mortal never trod,
The angel choirs mount toward the throne of God.

And oft, me thinks, they bend their flaming eyes
Down through the portals of the nether skies,
On us, poor mortals, struggling hence to rise.

Then their sweet words of heavenly hope descending,
Seem with the notes of heavenly music blending,
New life and courage to our spirit sending.

If e'er to try the giddy height thou fearest,
Listen—and when their cheering words thou hearest,
Press on with us to overtake them, dearest!

TO THE GROSSBEAK.

O! what a charming story you are telling,
Delightful prattler, 'mid the leaves of May!
Singing or talking, reading th' leaves or spelling,
I know, my dear, what 'tis you sing or say!

I heard a sweet-voiced maiden from the Tiber
Speaking the satin Latin of her land,*
Whose meaning thrilled my soul thro' every fibre;
Altho' the words I could not understand.

For there was something in the intonation
That told what happy thoughts and spirits light,
And sweet emotions in rich variation,
Flowed from the soul that could such notes indite.

Your words like hers, sweet bird, need no translator
To me a hidden meaning to reveal.
It is enough to know our kind Creator
Gave you the power to sing and me to feel.

And when, if ever, I arrive in Heaven,
A humble learner 'mid the ecstatic throng,
Your notes will seem to me to have been given
To help me understand the angels' song.

*See note IV., p. 191.

SUNSHINE.

—

You wished, bright opener of the door,
"To let the sunshine in," no doubt:
But, radiant one, you did far more—
You let a sweeter sunshine out.

OUR MIGNONETTE.

Thou comest with the other blossoms,
Sweet little flower of Paradise;
And joy awakes within our bosoms
To see thee ope thy smiling eyes.

Thy sisters of the groves and meadows
Spread balmy odors on the air,
But naught amid the vernal shadows
Can with thy odorous breath compare.

They bring to our delighted vision
Smiles from the rainbow's arch above;
Thou bringest from the fields elysian,
To bless our hearts, a smile of love.

The tuneful birds, for *their* reposing,
Sing them to sleep from branches high;
But when *thine* eye is softly closing,
The angels sing thy lullaby.

We know that soon thy sisters fading
  Shall vanish from the fields for aye;
And their sweet breath, the breeze now lading,
  That breeze unkind shall waft away.

But, oh! do thou remain to cheer us,
  E'en when the autumn days shall come;
Still with thy fragrance linger near us—
  Adorn and bless our quiet home.

CRESCO.

From the East the sturdy farmers
Came in friendly bands,
Seeking, 'mid these verdant prairies,
Homes and richer lands.
And the multifarious toilers
Who, with hand or brain,
Aid to mould the social fabric,
Followed in their train:
Planted here a growing hamlet—
Growth that ne'er should cease—
And with faith prophetic named it
Cresco—I increase.

Soon were seen the settlers' cabins
Rising here and there;
Soon were heard the sounds of labor
Filling all the air;

And the infant city planted
  Grew a busy mart,
Taking, sending vital currents
  Like a throbbing heart.
Halls of justice, schools and churches,
  Homes of joy and peace,
Justified the name prophetic—
  Cresco—I increase.

. . . . . .

Hither come, though late, a toiler
  In the field of One
Who repays with heavenly wages
  Earthly labor done—
Gives new strength to waning powers
  Till the close of day;
Strength to watch and wait and suffer,
  Strength to praise and pray—
Thus in spirit growing stronger
  Until death's release,
Here I make my own the motto,
  Cresco—I increase.

But the final hour approaches—
Hour that comes to all—
When my spirit, freed, ascending
From this earthly ball,
Shall be joined with saints and angels
On a brighter shore,
From their sweet, inspiring converse
Parted nevermore.
Growing wiser, purer, stronger,
Ages ne'er to cease,
I shall still repeat the motto,
Cresco—I increase.

CRESCO, IOWA, July, 1882.

ANTELINDIAN.*

A sense unwakened in my heart is dwelling,
Dormant, yet full of life and restless longing—
A nameless longing, all my spirit filling
And for an unknown joy impatient calling.
A joy unknown!—and yet its name sufficeth
To fill my soul with sweet and heavenly dreaming;
To plume for upward flight the wings of Fancy
Which bear me on thro' realms of radiant glory,
Till, listening at the pearly gate of Aidenn,
My ravished ear drinks in the song of seraphs.
That joy unknown waits for the voice of Jenny:
That sense unwakened is the power to feel it.

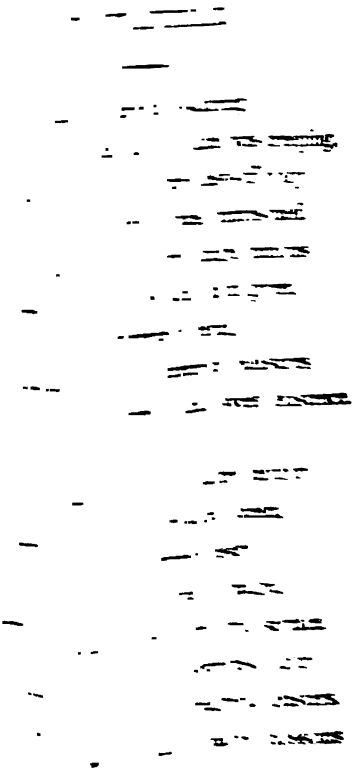
Enchantress of all lands! melodious Siren,
Whose voice to Heaven the mortal race entices!
Circe of song! whose sparkling cup o'erflowing
Transforms the brutish soul into an angel!

*See note V.

The one desire, my being all pervading,
The one wish that my longing heart o'erburthens—
My one resistless passion is to hear thee!
To drink the notes of that bewitching music,
Till reels each sense in sweet intoxication;
To feel my spirit upward—upward mounting,
Borne on the waves of melody seraphic,
Till, swooning in that sea of joy ethereal,
It sinks again on some bewildering cadence,
Which, falling earthward with a gentle motion,
Low dies away and leaves the soul still dreaming.
This is the joy, by Fancy warmly painted
Before that dreaming sense all unawakened:
This is the joy for which my heart is longing,
And yet knows not for what 'tis vaguely pining.—

So pines the cage-born bird for forest murmurs;
So pines the wingless for the buoyant ether:
So pines the cloistered maid for love's sweet music;
So pines the blind-born for the light of heaven!

March 20, 1851.



And bright leaves dancing in the golden sunlight,
Swayed to the soft wind's amorous caresses.
Birds of melodious song and fairy plumage
Disported 'mid the branches' gentle waving;
And gushing springs poured forth their liquid treasures,
Whose tinkling rills went murmuring thro' the meadows,
Spreading delicious coolness o'er the landscape.—

Thus fell upon my heart, in gushing showers,
The magic influence of that voice angelic:
And, lo! upspringing as by sweet enchantment,
A throng of blisses, heretofore untasted,
Found in the freshened soil a new existence.
All brightest joys, all highest aspirations,
The sweet fulfillment of all sweetest dreamings,
Were realized in that delicious moment.
Thanks, lovely Siren, for that spell of rapture!
Thanks for the lesson which thy voice hath given!
If e'er 'tis mine to join the heavenly chorus,
I shall the sooner learn the song of angels
For having listened to thy heavenly singing!

April 8, 1851.

THE DANCE OF THE AUTUMN LEAVES.

Borne by the restless winds along,
  Where the sorrowful woodland grieves,
Hither and thither a fitful throng,
  Merrily dance the Autumn leaves.

Upward they mount to the murky sky,
  Downward they plunge to the earth below;
Now in a giddy whirl they fly,
  Now in a madcap chace they go.

Tinkling gaily their feet advance
  Over the graves in thoughtless glee;
And the music to which they dance—
  Hark! 'tis a dirge's melody!

Onward merrily still they go
  Through the wood and over the wave,
Till they find in the wintry snow,
  Chilly and dark, their lonely grave.

. . . . . .

Borne by the Tempter's power along,
While kind Heaven in pity grieves,
Giddily pass the human throng,
Thoughtlessly as the Autumn leaves.

Upward they mount in fancies high,
Downward they plunge in pleasures low;
Now in the passion's whirl they fly,
Now in ambition's chase they go.

Merrily still their feet advance
Over the graves in thoughtless glee;
And the music to which they dance—
Hark! 'tis a dirge's melody.

Onward giddily still they go
Over the earth and over the wave,
Till they find in the depth below,
Chilly and dark, their lonely grave.

BIRD OF THE NORTH.

[Respectfully inscribed to Miss E. A. S., a music teacher in Nashville, Tennessee, on her departure to her home in New England.]

Bird of the North, art pining
For the green shelter of thy native tree,
That thus thou art resigning
So soon the sweets of this bright clime, to flee
Back to that Northern land, its rugged hills to see?

"Summer is smiling brightly
On my New England hills, all drest in green,
And scented breezes lightly
Are sporting now the leafy trees between.
There, warbling lays of love, my early mates are seen."

When wintry snows are falling
All cheerless over valley, hill and plain,
When winds to winds are calling
Thro' the bare trees, that moan as if in pain,
Say, wilt not sigh to see our sunny land again?

"Where my young mates are singing
In our sweet grove, there is a charmèd nest.
There happy hours are winging,
Spring, Summer, Fall, away in rapture blest.—
And even wintry winds mar not that blissful rest."

1851

THE STAR AND THE COMET.

Slow a radiant star is sinking
  Down the western sky,
While a nation, proud and grateful,
  Looks with tearful eye;
For its light has been her beacon
  Through a night of years,
Pointing out her path of glory,
  Banishing her fears.

In her darkest hour of sorrow
  She has gazed above,
Where her Cynosure was glowing
  With the light of love:
And the magic of its radiance
  Fired her heart anew;
And the demon host of dangers
  Vanished from her view.

Brighter glows its heavenly lustre,
As its ray departs;
And the deeper is the sadness
Of our stricken hearts;
For may never such another
Glorious star arise,
As the one whose brilliant setting
Gilds our western skies.

Let its name remain unspoken:
We who love it well,
Keep it shrined within our spirits,
Ever there to dwell.
While we weep its bright declining,
May its setting ray
Prove the light which gilds our morning—
Harbinger of day.

. . . . . .

Slowly sinks a baleful comet
Down the southern sky,
And a nation vexed and anxious
Looks with fearful eye:

For its light has been an omen
Boding only ill;
And that nation's heart it filleth
With an icy chill.

In her hour of darkest trial
She has turned away,
Shrinking from the fatal brightness
Of its lurid ray:
For its red, portentous gleaming
Filled her heart with dread,
And her sky with teeming dangers
Thickly overspread.

Redder glows its baleful lustre,
As its ray departs,
And the deeper is the terror
Of our shrinking hearts;
Lest it should diffuse, in setting,
Such a fearful spell
As the holiest star in heaven
Never can dispel.

Let its name remain unspoken;
We who fear its blight
Never can forget the beaming
Of its baleful light.
May its late and lurid setting,
Now of night the noon,
Give our shuddering hearts assurance
Morning breaketh soon.

1850.

BELOW THE MILL.

Streamlet issuing from the mill,
Where, with patient, earnest will,
Toils the great wheel, never still—

Tell me why, with voice so gay,
Through the vocal groves of May,
Thou art warbling on thy way?

Tell me why, with smile so bright,
Flashing in the fading light,
Thou art welcoming the night?

"Dweller on the toiling earth,
Whence thou soon must issue forth,
Gifted with immortal birth—

"It is meet that I should stray
Warbling on my jocund way:
I have wrought some good to-day.

"I have helped the world to feed,
(Is not that a worthy deed?)
And a joyous heart my meed.

"Would'st thou pass away like me
With a calm serenity,
From regret and sorrow free?

"Let each passing hour be fraught
With some deed in virtue wrought,
With some soul-ennobling thought:

"Then, amid the twilight gray,
Thou, like me, wilt sing and say:
'*I have wrought some good to-day.*'

"And when fades the evening light,
Waiting for a dawning bright,
Thou shalt welcome thus the night."

THE NAIAD OF THE LAKE.

[Respectfully inscribed to Miss Kittie White, of Gallatin, Tennessee, on being presented by her with a pebble from "Lake Purity," in Mammoth Cave.]

Within a deep, mysterious cave
There is a lake, whose crystal wave
Plays in such bright and heavenly sheen,
As sinful eye hath never seen—
Whose murmurs sweet their music make
To the bright Naiad of the Lake.

Within its pearly waters lie
The brightest forms that charm the eye:
Along its shore, to music dear,
The sweetest sounds salute the ear—
And sights and sounds conspire to make
Joy for the Naiad of the Lake.

Gems of the fairest ray divine
High in its vaulted concave shine,
Beneath whose light the waters glow;
While purest creatures bending low
Their thirst with sacred joy to slake,
Adore the Naiad of the Lake.

A fairy gift thou bringest me
From that bright Lake of Purity,
Whose every stone hath mystic power
To guard the soul in evil hour:
This talisman with pride I take
From *thee*—bright Naiad of the Lake.

1851.

LUE AND MAGGIE.

Eyes gleaming bright with her high aspirations,
Features aglow with the light of her soul;
Lips overflowing with sweet revelations
Gushing from fountains that brook no control—
Faultless in form as in radiant features,
Lit by a heart ever loving and true;
Sweetest and fairest of fairy-like creatures—
Such is the brilliantly blossoming Lue.

Eyes that gleam with milder lustre,
Face that breathes a gentler spell;
Lips where pure thoughts fondly cluster,
Where all playful fancies dwell;
Heart that glows with warm affections,
Light of home, from Eden flung;
Centre of all sweet attractions—
Such is Maggie, fair and young.

Lue is the flashing and brilliant Aurora,
Gilding the East at the breaking of day;
While her attendant, the beautiful Flora,
Spangles with blossoms her radiant way.
Birds sing to greet her, their moist plumage shaking,
Sparkling with gems from the mantle of night;
And in her presence all Nature, awaking,
Smiles to her smile with a look of delight.

Maggie is the charming Vesper
Kindling in the golden West,
When the evening zephyrs whisper
Low farewells—and sink to rest.
Happiest hours to her are given
As the shadows lengthen by;
And the loving stars of Heaven
Smile to bless her from the sky.

There's a bright rivulet seeking the ocean,
Now through the forest, now over the lea;
Dancing along with a fairy-like motion—
Dancing and singing in innocent glee:

Sporting with blossoms that drink from its chalice,
Gleaming in sunshine or hid from the view;
Pride of the mountain and joy of the valleys—
Such is the sweet, ever-radiant Lue.

There's a lakelet in a meadow,
'Neath the azure-tinted skies,
Playing with the sun and shadow,
As its billows sink and rise:
Flashing back the hues of even,
While the radiance, o'er it flung,
Paints, below, the quiet Heaven—
Such is Maggie, fair and young.

THE SONG BIRD'S DEPARTURE.

[Respectfully inscribed to Miss C. F. I., departing to Georgia as a music teacher.]

When, from this clime of ours,
Far south the Robin seeks his winter home,
He builds no nest amid the southern bowers,
Though thither doomed to roam—
Nor sings his matin lay in that bright realm of flowers.

He pines to see once more
The pleasant orchard where he learned to sing
The notes which won so many hearts of yore;
And, with a buoyant wing,
He'll haste his glad return, when winter's reign is o'er.

And yet he leaveth here
No loved ones grieving for his long delay:
Shunning the storms which make our winter drear.
With him they fled away—
With him they will return, when vernal days appear.

But thou, in that far clime,
O sweetest songstress of this northern dell!
Wilt sing the songs of thy own vernal time—
Songs which we love so well!
And southern hearts will thrill beneath thy notes sublime.

And yet thou leavest here
All that have loved thee since thy natal day.
The hearts are sad which to thy heart are dear,
For thou art far away;
And oft in silence falls the unforbidden tear.

Thy home no more is filled
With music tones, which made its charm of late.
The wires which to thy touch harmonious thrilled,
In dreary silence wait
The coming of that hand in Heaven's own magic skilled.

Then with the northern bird
Returning gladly from his southern home,
When by the breath of spring our groves are stirred,
Return—no more to roam;
And with his joyous notes let thy sweet voice be heard!

THE TWO COLOR LINES.

[Read on Memorial Day, at Marshalltown, Iowa, May 31, 1877.]

The white and the black fought side by side
On many a crimson plain,
Where the sabre flashed and the cannon roar'd,
And the bullets fell like rain.
And the blood flowed red from the wounds of both
As they fell for liberty;
And the echoes rang from the lips of both
When they shouted "Victory!"
No envious pride of race felt one,
No cringing fear the other;

But each was proud to own in each
A hero and a brother.
Each gladly joined the laurel wreath
On the other's brow to twine;
And thus 'twas the hand of valor first
Wiped out the color line.

Then the sacred power that broke the chain
From the limbs of the fettered slave,
Stood forth in majesty to guard
The freedom that first she gave:
And she penned in letters of living light
These words sublime and true—
"A man's a man before the law,
Whatever his race or hue.
Who fires a bullet in my defense,
A ballot, too, shall wield;
And over the voter's head I'll place
My broad, protecting shield."
And all the good gave shouts of joy
To see such powers combine,
When valor and law joined hand in hand
To efface the color line.

But another power must yet arise
In the fullness of her might,
To finish what valor and law began
For justice and for right.
The national conscience must awake,
More free, more strong, more brave,
To smite with a curse the men who make
An American a slave.
Who wears the badge of citizenship,
Whatever his color may be,
Must stand a king among his peers
And tread our free soil *free*.
O happy the day for our glorious land,
When all her powers combine—
Law, valor and conscience leading all—
To efface the color line.

. . . . . .

While the blue and the gray stood in hostile array
Along each gleaming front,

Their picket-guards to cross the lines
For social chat were wont.
There they cracked new jokes and sang old songs
And smoked the pipe of peace;
And stories told of the days of old,
And wished the war might cease.
Each fought for a cause he deemed the best,
Though one alone was right;
And they who to-morrow as foes might meet
Were chatting as friends to-night.
Thus the boys in blue and the boys in gray,
While the May sun ceased to shine,
In pleasant memories of the past
Forgot their color line.

And when at last the war was closed
On Appomattox field—
When the blue came off victorious,
And the gray was forced to yield,
The generous victors never dreamed
Of humbling a fallen foe:

They were brothers before the war began,
And they would still be so.
One duty, one oath, should be for both—
To obey the law's demand;
To abjure rebellion forevermore,
And be true to the common land.
And so wherever, on North or South,
Yon glorious sun may shine,
The stars and stripes of that dear old flag
Mark the only color line.

In many a city of the dead,
Both North and South, repose
Now side by side the blue and the gray,
Forgetting they once were foes.
And they who bring, in the days of spring,
Their floral gifts to one,
Are all too loving, and brave, and kind,
The other in pride to shun.
The deeds and the lessons of the war
On history's page shall last;

But the feelings it bred in the hearts of men
Shall soon be things of the past.
Though error's the lot of mortal man,
Forgiveness is all divine—
And so may the living as well as the dead
Forget the color line.

We bring to-day the flowers of May
To deck these honored graves,
Where now, in their long and last repose,
Are sleeping our fallen braves.
An emblem sweet of those who sleep
Is every floral gem:
The slumbering heroes died for us
As the flowerets die for them:
And the fragrant memories of the dead
A sacred incense rise,
Like the odor of these dying flowers,
A hallowed sacrifice.

May the thoughts that spring in our hearts to-day
Be a fragrance all divine,
And the flowers we spread and the tears we shed
Blot out each color line!

THE SHANNON AND THE RHINE.

A SONG.

[Affectionately inscribed to my friend, F. A. Sporer, Professor of Music in Sumner Female Academy, Gallatin, Tennessee.]

From the banks of the Shannon a sweet Irish maiden
Came over the sea to our fortunate shore—
A purer ne'er roamed thro' the bowers of Aidenn;
A fonder her own loving isle never bore.
From the banks of the Rhine a young minstrel was straying—
He saw the fair maiden; he wooed and he won.
Love gently the envy of races allaying,
Teutonic and Celtic were mingled in one.
Arethuse yielded not to her Alphey's devotion,
Till pursued thro' the sea with a passion divine;
And thus—their two streams passing under the ocean—
Were mingled the waves of the Shannon and Rhine.

Two national melodies, charmingly blended,
  Their lives floated on in a harmony sweet.
Fair Peace from the skies to their dwelling descended,
  Their warm hearts to knit in a union complete.
A few happy summers the sunshine of gladness
  Illumined their home with a heavenly ray:
But, alas! it was soon overclouded with sadness—
  For she who had blest it was summoned away.
And he, the lone minstrel, all desolate-hearted,
  Was left o'er his mute harp in sorrow to pine—
Thus Death, the Relentless One, cruelly parted
  The bright-mingled waves of the Shannon and Rhine.

But guided by angels thro' Death's gloomy billows,
  She came to that clime, free from sorrow or pain,
Where her minstrel, his harp taking down from the
      willows,
  Shall one day awaken its music again.
O! sweeter the joy of that blessed reunion,
  For all that on earth they have suffered, shall be;
And closer forever shall be their communion,
  Unblinded by sense, from the mortal set free.

No fear to molest, and no hope to be thwarted,
Their spirits shall bask in a rapture divine—
And thus shall be joined, nevermore to be parted,
The bright-flowing waves of the Shannon and Rhine.

1852.

ELISHA.

[On the accession of Vice-President Arthur, after the assassination of President Garfield.]

Take up reverently the fallen mantle,
Left to thee by thine ascending master,
As borne upward in His flaming chariot,
Our Jehovah took him home to glory!
With that mantle smite the turbid Jordan
Thou must cross to find thy path of duty;
And th' obedient waves shall ope before thee,
And, like Joshua, thou shalt pass over,
Leader, prophet, *saviour* of thy people.
Then endued with that celestial garment,
Enter thou on thy prophetic office;
And the sons of all the seers, exulting,
Loud shall sing to thee the sacred pæan:
"Praiséd be the Lord! On our Elisha
Rests the chosen spirit of Elijah!"

O! anointed by the God of Abram,
Ruler of the grandest of the nations,
And thus bound, by all things pure and holy,
In His name and by His law to govern,
Banish from the realm the loathsome worship
Of that modern Baal, Lust of Office,
Whose mad priests thy now ascended master
Fearless met and routed in confusion.
Keep those routed hosts forever scattered;
Quench th' unholy fire upon their altars,
And th' unholy altars dash in pieces.
Disappoint their hope, which so insults thee,
Even in thee to find a new protector,
And the setter-up of Baal's worship!
Thus the glory of our lost Elijah,
Flaming downward from the empyrean,
Shall give lustre to thy crown forever!

THE NESTLINGS AND THE BIRD OF PARADISE.

A bright and joyous pair,
In early spring, had made their happy nest
Upon a bough in vernal beauty drest,
Amid the blossoms fair.

And soon their callow young,
Among the rustling leaves, made sweetly heard
Their infant voices—while each parent bird
Its thankful matins sung.

Flew by on wings of joy
The hours by sweet domestic care beguiled;
And kind, propitious Heaven looked down and smiled
Upon their sweet employ.

But one bright summer day,
Sudden, beneath their tree, a murderous sound
Was heard—and lo! the father, fluttering on the ground
Bleeding and dying lay!

With loud and piteous cries,
The frightened mother shrieks for help in vain—
For hark! that murderous sound is heard again—
She falls to earth and dies!

All day the tender brood
For their poor murdered parents vainly cried;
At every leaflet's murmur opening wide
Their little mouths for food.

All night they shivering lay,
Chilled by the night-dews in their lonely nest,
Unwarmed by their fond mother's sheltering breast—
Moaning the hours away.

Fainter and fainter grew,
Next morn, their dying cries; when—joy to see!—
A stranger bird alighted on the tree,
With plumes of brilliant hue.

Folding her beauteous wing,
She saw with grief the famished ones below—
With sympathetic heart felt all their woe,
And flew relief to bring.

With ever new delight
She fed and cheered and guarded them by day;
And, while the dew fell cold upon the spray,
She sheltered them by night.

And when their pinions bright,
Full-fledged, might from their cradle-home depart,
She lured them forth with sweet, enticing art,
And guided them in flight.

Then, bidding them farewell,
She spread her pinions for that clime unknown,
Whence, on a sacred mission she had flown,
Awhile with them to dwell.

"Stay, foster-mother, stay!"
They cried, "till we have learned thy sacred name—
Till thou hast told us whence thy presence came—
Us thither taught the way."

With voice of melody
She sang, upmounting toward her native skies,
"Among the Angel Choirs of Paradise,
My name is *Charity*."

THE DEW.

When the sombre shades of even
  Gather o'er the darkened earth,
Silently the dew of heaven
  Through the dim air wanders forth;
And, with holy ministration,
  Hasting on its angel wings,
Life to fainting vegetation,
  As a gentle spirit brings.

Then, as glance the rays of morning
  O'er the newly wakened earth,
Smiling flowers, her lap adorning,
  To the night dew owe their birth:
And the scented mead rejoices,
  Bathing still in fragrant dew.
And a thousand happy voices
  Breathe for it their songs anew.

. . . . . .

When the sombre shades of sorrow
  Cloud the heart and dim the eye,
Silent thus, ere dawns the morrow,
  Falls the dew of sympathy.
And a holy benediction
  Bearing on its balmy wings,
Hope and courage in affliction
  To the fainting soul it brings.

Then, as o'er the waking spirit
  Wakes anew the joyous morn,
Flowers of hope and gladness cheer it,
  From the dew of kindness born.
And the heart is like a meadow
  Freshened by the fragrant dew,
Where, from sunshine and from shadow,
  Choral songs are heard anew.

BLESSINGS VANISHED.

Rose of a western bower,
Ah! why with me so brief must be thy stay?
Couldst thou not linger from thy home away,
But one sweet fleeting hour?

Thy beauty and perfume
Would soon all sadness from my heart dispel,
Where now alone a thousand sorrows dwell,
Uncheered by thy sweet bloom.

Bird of a western wild,
Why spread so soon thy azure wing in flight?
My heart once felt a sense of strange delight,
By thy sweet voice beguiled.

But now I'm desolate!
Thy gentle voice greets not my listening ear,
But in my heart is silence, sad and drear.—
Alas! my mournful fate!

Star of the western sky,
Ah! why so soon departs thy blessed light?
When thou art gone, no beauty of the night
Can charm my languid eye.

My soul is dark and drear,
Unlighted by thy kind and cheering ray.
The brightness of my life has passed away,
And I am weeping here!

'*Maid of the West*, farewell!
Dearer than all—flower, bird and smiling star—
Thou leavest me; but in thy home afar
My heart shall fondly dwell.

1845.

THE TWO CONQUERORS.

[Read at the funeral services held in commemoration of General Grant, in Cresco, Iowa, August 8, 1885.]

Before him stood the hosts of Lee
  Guarding the rebel Capital;
Ready to die, but not to flee,
  Nor see that stubborn city fall.
Ne'er was a cause so bad upheld
By bravery so unexcelled.

But Grant, as stubborn for the right,
  Had said to hosts as brave and true:
"Upon this line we'll win the fight,
  Tho' it should last the summer thro'."
Greek had met Greek, and nations far
Shuddered to see "the tug of war."

The trees of that dread Wilderness
In which the fearful fight began,
Still trembling as of old, confess
What thrill of horror thro' them ran,
When they were scarred by shot and shell
By which so many heroes fell.

Virginia's hills, that conscious stood,
Echoed each dying groan and shriek.
Virginia's rivers, stained with blood,
Ran shuddering to the Chesapeake.
Virginia's plains, full many a scar
Still wear of that gigantic war.

They fought it out upon that line,
But 'twas a zigzag traced in gore.
That summer's sun had ceased to shine—
Nay, fall and winter too were o'er,
Before, on Appomattox field,
Lee and his host were forced to yield.

Behind them stood th' abandoned place
For which they'd fought so long and well.

What forms of woe they still must face,
They dared not guess, they could not tell;
Perhaps in prison cells to lie;
Perhaps a felon's death to die.

Upon that battle-battered host
A stern and gloomy silence fell.
No more was heard the rebel boast;
No more that startling "rebel yell."
In sad suspense they only wait
The Conqueror's word to seal their fate.

And this the startling word they hear:
"I come, a liberating friend,
To bring you news of right good cheer;
To give this painful strife an end.
The war is o'er and peace has come:
Live and be happy, going home!"

. . . . . .

Years, full of usefulness and fame,
  Passed o'er *our* "good gray head," well known.
All human tongues the Conqueror's name
  In praise had sung from zone to zone.
And long we hoped our nation's pride
Might, in the land he saved, abide.

But soon the nation, in dismay,
  Heard that a mightier foe than Lee
Had crossed his rival Conqueror's way,
  Crying: "O hero, yield to me!
My own thy terms historical—
'Surrender unconditional!'"

But Grant, the man of iron will,
  Who knew not when or how to yield,
Aided by highest human skill,
  Still obstinately kept the field—
Warding off many an unseen blow,
Aimed deftly by that unseen foe.

And still that foe kept on his track;
  Now with the hero crossing swords;

Now, for a moment, driven back—
  Repeating still those ominous words:
"Tho' summer end and fall begin,
Upon this line I'll fight and win."

Upon a mountain's goodly height
  At length is made a final stand.
The issue of the solemn fight
  The hero places in the hand
Of One without whose fiat's call
Nor conquerors nor sparrows fall.

But first he speaks his foeman's ear:
  "If I may not thy face behold,
Lest I should blanch with mortal fear,
  At least thy name, O foeman bold!"
"They call me 'King of Terrors, Death;'
To me all mortals yield their breath!"

We ne'er shall know what tho'ts of gloom
  Perchance came o'er the warrior's soul,
Hearing that startling sound of doom,
  So like the solemn thunder's roll.
In silence he could only wait
The Conqueror's word to seal his fate.

O joy, his own kind words to hear!
"I come, thy liberating friend,
To bring thee news of right good cheer.
Disease and pain here have an end.
The fight is o'er, sweet peace has come:
Live and be happy, *going home!*"

30309B

THE SUMMER FLOWER.

A DIRGE.

Gone art thou, Summer Flower,
That, shrinking from the coming Autumn's breath,
Hast left thy verdant bower
And meekly faded in the arms of Death.

It was not thine to feel
The frosts that, thro' the Northland's wide domain,
Fair Nature's veins congeal,
And spread decay o'er valley, hill and plain.

It was not thine to die,
By slow degrees, amid autumnal gloom
And 'neath a leaden sky,
To waste on falling leaves thy last perfume.

Thy beauty had not fled,
When gently fell thy petals, bright and fair,
That e'en in falling shed
Their sweetest odor on the evening air.

. . . . .

So, Mary, it was thine
To die ere age had shed its chilling blight—
Ere, in its sad decline,
Thy peerless beauty faded on our sight.

Farewell! 'Tis very sad
To lose thee from this world so full of gloom;
But, oh! our hearts are glad
To know in Heaven thou wilt immortal bloom.

THE FOOTMAN.

Plodding along in a dusty road,
Under the heat of the noontide ray,
Lame and weary a footman trode,
Faint from his long and toilsome way.

Painfully on his shoulders borne,
Heavy his ponderous knapsack hung;
And his musket, rusty and worn,
Over his arm was wearily swung.

Wiping the sweat from his burning face,
Blinded with dust and the scorching ray,
Fared he on at a lagging pace,
Sighing thus for the close of day:

"Sweet, oh! sweet is the evening shade;
Sweet the breath of the evening air;
Pleasant the spring in the turfy glade,
Bubbling up from its fountain clear.

"Sweet on the fragrant grass to lie,
There in dreams to forget my woes;
While the stars in the moonlit sky,
Smiling shall bless my calm repose."

. . . . .

Over the toilworn path of life,
Lone, where myriads lonely roam,
Sick and weary of human strife,
Slowly a mortal journeyed home.

On his heart was a weight of grief,
On his soul was a load of sin;
And his conscience prayed for relief
From its burden of guilt within.

Wiping a tear from his clouded eye,
Blinded with doubt, by the Tempter prest;
Fared he on with many a sigh—
Sighing thus for his final rest:

"Sweet, oh! sweet are the shades that lie
Over the calm and silent grave;
Sweet from the sorrows of earth to fly,
Sweet in the Fountain of Peace to lave.

"Sweet 'neath the flowery turf to rest,
There in sleep to forget my woes;
While the stars in the glowing west,
Smiling shall bless my calm repose."

THE MOUNTAIN PINE.

[Respectfully inscribed to my friend, the Hon. John J. White, of Gallatin, Tennessee.]

The autumn frost has fallen
Upon thy boughs of green,
And all thy tiny leaflets
Have felt its arrows keen;
But autumn frost has tarnished,
No more than vernal dew,
That beauty never-fading,
Thy bright and youthful hue.

The wintry snow has fallen
In many a crystal shower
Upon thy fadeless branches,
With all its chilling power:
But wintry snow has tarnished
No more than summer rain
That beauty which forever
Thy verdant boughs retain.

The summer drouth above thee
Has shed its parching ray,
Till all things bright around thee
Were fading to decay:
But summer drouth has tarnished
No more than vernal dew
That beauty, bright and fadeless,
Thy ever-youthful hue.

And thus the blighting powers,
O stately Mountain Pine,
That blast all other beauty,
Are harmless all to thine.
Whatever cruel season
Deforms the forest dells,
Amid thy verdant branches
The spring time ever dwells.

. . . . .

The frost of time has fallen
Upon thy temples now,
And left full many traces
Of thought upon thy brow;

But time has never tarnished,
  Whate'er his victory,
The freshness of thy spirit,
  Thy love of poesy.

And wealth has o'er thee fallen
  In many a crystal shower,
Yet never has thy spirit
  Sunk 'neath its chilling power:
For wealth could never tarnish
  The brightness of a soul,
In which all generous feelings
  Usurp a sweet control.

And Legal Lore has claimed thee
  Her ardent worshiper
While stores of worldly wisdom
  Her willing hands confer:
But e'en that "dry profession"
  Could never dim in thee
The freshness of thy spirit,
  Thy love of poesy.

And thus the blighting powers,
O generous friend of mine!
That chill so many spirits,
Are harmless all to thine.
Whatever wintry coldness
O'er other hearts presides,
The freshness of the springtime
In thine for aye abides.

THE TWO OAKS.

Oak in yonder meadow growing,
Downward all thy branches throwing,
  Dwarfed and stunted toward the earth,
Why so low and unaspiring—
When, beyond thy heart's desiring,
  Rain and sunshine blest thy birth?

"Sun and rain my youth caressing,
Proved to me no genial blessing;
  For I trusted to their aid.
Light too easily obtaining,
Every effort proud disdaining,
  I a puny dwarf was made."

Oak that, thro' the gloomy forest,
Up to heaven sublimely soarest,
  Till thy top afar is seen,
What the secret of thy glory—
Born amid the shadows hoary,
  Far from sunny meadows green?

" Born amid the mountain shadows,
Far from green and sunny meadows,
I would view the open sky.
Struggling lest the gloom o'ershade me—
Struggling for the light—hath made me,
As thou seest, great and high!"

. . . . .

Soul, thy gaudy titles wearing,
Friends and countless treasure sharing,
Yet so poor in mental worth;
Why so low and unaspiring,
When, beyond thy own desiring,
Smiling Fortune blest thy birth?

" Fortune's hand my youth caressing,
Proved to me no genial blessing;
For I trusted to her aid.
Knowledge easily obtaining,
Every effort proud disdaining,
I a puny soul was made."

Noble soul, yet poor and friendless,
With an effort, strong and endless,
Mounting high the path of fame;
What the secret of thy glory—

Born amid the shadows hoary,
Which at first obscured thy name?

"Through the shades, my vision bounding,
Through all obstacles surrounding,
I would see truth's heavenly sky.
Struggling lest the gloom o'ershade me—
Struggling for the light—hath made me,
As thou seest, great and high!"

THE PAWN.

AN ODE WITH A MORAL.

[Respectfully dedicated to American Chess players.]

O valorous Pawn,
So bravely marching on
With dauntless heart and ever advancing tread,
No backward-faltering step thou takest,
And never from the path
Which from thy humble bivouac led,
A move aside thou makest,
Save when some boastful, threatening foe
Provokes thy honest wrath
To deal the avenging blow:
And even then thy stride
Still pushes forward as it turns aside;
And suddenly the fatal bolt is sped
Which lays the braggart low.
And on again thy tireless footsteps go!

But if there meet thee on his march of fame
An equal foeman, struggling on like thee,
Thou, scorning all immunity
Save that which valor's self may claim,
Wilt never, by redoubled pace,
Avoid that gallant foeman's face;
But to his gleaming lance in rest
Barest thy brawny breast,
Regarding noble death a higher bliss
Than life prolonged by coward artifice.

I saw a wrathful king,
Whose fatal prescience knew in thee his foe,
With sword unsheathed and armor glittering,
Rush forth to lay thee low.
With one gigantic spring,
Outreaching twice his royal stride,
Thou startedst—but with looks of pride
And none of coward fear:
'Twas that thou sawest, near,

The goal whose magic touch should be
To thee the gift of royalty.
Then, with a hero-tread
Thy footsteps onward sped;
And though the magic line anear he viewed,
Thy royal foe
With blind, infatuate rage pursued.

The goal is reached—and lo!
Upstarting like Minerva from the head
Of laboring Jove, thou standest
Before his wondering sight
In glittering panoply bedight,
Of sovereign queens the grandest—
And fillest all his trembling soul with dread.

Not that Assyrian queen,
Semiramis,
Nor that proud Amazon, I ween,
Penthesilea, ever knew

A glory like to this;
E'en when the clanging trump of fame
Her vaunted name
In notes triumphant loudest blew!

The vanquished king—
His equanimity restored,
And all his fear absorbed in wondering—
Yielded, with gallant grace his sword;
And owned his proudest victory
Far less than to be conquered thus by thee.
O valorous pawn,
Sublimely marching on
To victory thus nobly won,
Thou art to me an emblem meet
Of some aspiring soul,
Whom all the storms of fate can ne'er defeat;
But who, with might that spurns control,
From lowliest origin
Goes forth the loftiest meeds to win!

Purse-proud Prerogative, in vain,
And not a few
Of his obsequious crew
Glare on the victor's course with looks of wrath,
And strive with might and main
To barricade his path.
But naught their idle rage he heeds:
No terror shakes, no toil impedes;
But with o'ermastering will,
He still advances, conquering still;
Until, at last, the wished-for goal is won,
And radiant glory crowns her favorite son.
Then the inconstant world,
Whose lip so late was curled
In scornful pity or in pitying scorn,
With shouts that rend the air,
The boasted truth declare:
"The rude plebeian was a hero born!"
O Pawn, if on the battle-field of life
My courage falter in the darkest strife,

Or e'er my spirit shrinks from toil and pain,
I'll think of thee, and so take heart again!

THE POET AND THE ROBIN.

"And so it may be that, in some simpler age, poets may go back, like the old Minnesingers, to the birds of the forest and learn of them to sing."—*Charles Kingsley.*

"O why should I sing the song I sung
In the vernal years when life was young?—
The song that happier bards of yore,
In sweeter strains sang o'er and o'er?

"The world's grown old, and the song grown stale:
'Twill be heard, if at all, as a twice-told tale.
So hide in the dust, my broken lyre;
Be buried in ashes, O sacred fire!"

'Twas thus I bewailed the vanished time
When my spirit exulted on wings of rhyme—
And the low pursuits which now engage
The duller thoughts of an iron age.

But as forth I wandered, one vernal morn,
When the South first whispered, "The Spring is born!"
I heard the returning robin's lay,
As he cheerily sang on a leafless spray.

He heeded not the air which still
Shivered and shrunk from the wintry chill:
He heeded not the landscape brown,
Still wearily waiting its vernal crown.

He asked not, he cared not, if ever an ear
The song he was singing would deign to hear;
For he sang in the joy of the blissful bard
Whose song brings with it its own reward.

The old, old story he sang again,
Of the sunshine and the vernal rain—
Of the sprouting buds and the bursting flowers,
And the love that fills this world of ours.

'Twas the self-same story he oft had told—
That countless robins had sung of old:
But the earth which had heard it o'er and o'er,
Now listened as grateful as ever before.

The air, yet feeling the wintry chill,
Bore onward the notes with a joyous thrill;
And the groves caught up the inspiring sound,
And echo repeated it, round and round.

And gladsome voices of old and young
Exultingly cried, while the notes were sung,
" O hasten and list to the well-known strain—
The robin and springtime have come again!"

And grateful for all the singer taught,
My soul the spirit of poesie caught.
Again I sing as I sang of yore,
In the vernal years that are now no more.

" O youth of love that ne'er grows old!
O warmth of love that ne'er grows cold!
O breath of love that impels the song
Of seraphs or men or feathered throng!

" 'Tis the song of love that never dies—
Whose melody fills earth, sea and skies;
Whose notes shall never in vain be heard
From the tuneful bard or the tuneful bird.

" The world, though old, is young and hale:
'Twill list, well pleased, to the old-new tale.
So rise from the dust, my broken lyre!
Burst forth into song, O sacred fire!

" The song of love that I sing again,
May lighten for many the load of pain:
Or, if none should list to the notes I've sung,
They will keep my own heart fresh and young."

A VISION.

[Respectfully inscribed to my friend, G. K. C.]

I saw, around the Mount of Song,
The motley rhyming crowd assembled.
Each eager face, amid the throng,
With hope and fear alternate trembled—
Upturned to view the height sublime;
But few had strength of limb to climb.

They saw the summit in the beams
Of fame immortal brightly flashing:
They saw and heard the vocal streams
In bright cascades melodious dashing;
And breathed the sweet rose-scented gales
Anon descending to the vales.

There, in a cool, delicious grove,
They saw the mountain dryads thronging;
Amid the enchanted scene to rove
Their raptured thoughts were vaguely longing;
But rough and steep the toilsome way
Between them and the summit lay.

Some, with a reckless waste of strength,
Shot upward, naught their course impeding;
Till quite o'erspent, they failed at length,
With feeble effort back receding;
And sank amid the shadows gray,
That round about the mountain lay.

Some, with no power alone to rise,
Essay some leader's track to follow;
Others, with weak and piteous cries,
Beg the assistance of Apollo.
The scornful god this answer flings:
"A tortoise ne'er should covet wings!"

But, lo! from out the mist appears
A bard with youthful exultation.

Upon his poet-brow he wears
  The light of heavenly inspiration;
And sweetly sounds his golden lyre,
As up his dauntless feet aspire.

With wonder all that motley throng
  Behold him step by step advancing;
With wonder hear his thrilling song
  A thousand willing hearts entrancing:
And admiration, for a while,
Doth envy's cruel pain beguile.

No backward-faltering step he takes,
  But upward still with vigor presses.
No toil impedes, no terror shakes;
  For, lo! the god his labor blesses—
And soon he stands upon the height,
Bathed in that flood of golden light.

Amid those beams, his eye of fire
  Flashes with lustre all undying,
And songs immortal, from his lyre,
  With songs of old renown are vying:
But, stay! I dream—it cannot be—
It is! My youthful friend I see!

O joy! to see that well-known face,
With such a deathless glory lighted.
O foolish hope! my name to trace,
With *his* name evermore united:
But this the burden of my prayer—
" Let me but stand beside him there!"

"THE HOLY INNOCENTS."

A CONTRAST.

A cruel king has heard that, 'mid the dells
Of Bethlehem, the Infant Sovereign dwells,
Whose power divine is destined to o'erthrow
All power usurped by tyrant kings below.

His name, his home, his parentage unknown,
How shall that Infant Sovereign be o'erthrown?
Trembling with fear and blind with helpless rage,
How shall that king his maddened grief assuage?

With bloody hands is sent a warlike band,
To slay the children of that fated land;
That haply thus the Prince of Peace may fall
In the red carnage that extermines all.

Now sadly rise, upon the burdened air,
Weak infant shrieks and wailings of despair.
Now wildly wander, over hill and plain,
Pale mothers, frantic for their children slain.

. . . . . .

A noble state has heard that, 'mid the dells
Of her fair realm, the infant ruler dwells,
Whose hand, with delegated power one day,
For weal or woe, her destiny shall sway.

Unknown his name, his home, his parentage,
How shall that child be taught to serve his age?
What hand aright his growing mind shall rear?
How shall that state allay her anxious fear?

Blest Education, with impartial hand,
Is sent to train the children of that land;
That surely thus her ruler may be taught
In the same lessons that to all are brought.

Now shouts of joy from every hearth arise,
And fanes of learning point to smiling skies;
And happy parents in contentment rest,
With grateful pride to see their children blest.

THE GLOW-WORM AND THE NIGHT-FLY.

"In the Glow-worm (*Lampyris Noctiluca*) it is only the female that is luminous; and she is destitute of wings and elytra, which the male possesses. They are active only by night, and as the male is known to be attracted, like moths, by lights in houses, it is possible that the phosphorescence of the female is given for the purpose of signalizing her position to him."—*Chamber's Zoology.*

"When sinks the twilight in the fading west,"
(Thus sang a glow-worm to her night-fly lover)
"I watch for thee from out my grassy nest—
For thee, so long amid the stars a rover.

"And when I see thy pinion gleaming bright,
With joy and pride my grateful heart is swelling—
That thou should'st leave thy starry home to-night,
To cheer and bless me in my humble dwelling!

"How mean and lowly seemed my quiet sphere,
When first I saw thee soaring high above me;
Yet seems it noble now when thou art near,
Since one like thee has deigned to know and love me.

"With ne'er a wing on which to soar above,
Till thou didst come my heart was sad and lonely.
I have no radiance but the light of love
Which I have lit for thee, and for thee only.

"Oh! leave me not—or if at times thy wing
Must seek its path of glory and of beauty,
"Oh! oft return, to where I'm lingering
To guard for thee the shrine of love and duty!"

Then sang the night-fly to his glow-worm bride:
"The stars above beamed brightly on my vision,
And lured me upward in my foolish pride,
To seek, amid their light, a joy elysian.

"But cold and dim their radiance o'er me shone,
While still I struggled toward the upper heaven.
My heart was chill, and felt itself alone,
From all sweet sympathy so sadly riven.

"Then from thy home amid the dewy grass
The gentle halo of thy ray appearing,
I left the stars to light their home of glass,
And flew with joy to meet thy radiance cheering.

"Brighter and holier still that radiance grew,
Which from the dim and distant skies had won me;
Till at thy side I felt a rapture new,
In the warm light that shone so sweetly on me.

"Henceforth to lure my captive soul from thee—
O sweetest goal of my fond aspirations!—
All powerless shall the stars forever be,
Tho' in one blaze shine all their constellations!"

. . . . . .

Thus, while sweet evening brought the twilight hour,
Once sang a maiden to her poet-lover—
And thus, while sitting in her rosy bower,
Sang to his bride the star-enraptured rover.

THE NEWLY DISCOVERED STAR.

[Suggested by the birth of a son to the Rev. Dr. S. North, president of Hamilton College.]

A new star has arisen, triumphant and bright,
O'er the firmament spreading its infantile rays;
And its beauty awakes a new thrill of delight,
As it meets the astronomer's wondering gaze.

Hail! hail to that star as it rises on high:
In hope we await its high zenith of fame,
When the eye of the world shall be turned to the sky,
Spell-bound by the glow of its beautiful flame.

Let it rise in its joy-giving splendor awhile;
And its light as a beacon to guide and to save,
O'er the billowy ocean of Science shall smile,
To guide toiling mariners over the wave.

One twinkler alone, in the concave sublime,
Can vie with this new one, and *that* but in name;
For the North Star, renowned since the dawning of time,
Shall not rival *our* North Star in glory and fame.

1842.

THE LOST STAR.

[Respectfully inscribed to Dr. and Mrs. S. North on the death of their only son.]

Forth from the heavenly blue,
All radiant with the light that dwells beyond,
A sweet star came to view,
With loving smiles that answered smiles as fond.

Responsive to the prayers
Of yearning hearts, it left its home of light;
And, through a few brief years,
With smiling ray it blest our raptured sight.

But when the word was given,
That bade it deck no more our azure skies,
It faded back to Heaven,
And blinding grief suffused our weeping eyes.

We saw it slowly fade:
And when, at last, it vanished from our sight,
A darkness like the shade
Of death, enclosed us in a rayless night.

Full many stars remain,
Their cheering light on other hearts to shed;
But ours shall ne'er again
Illume the path we now must sadly tread.

From all the lights which burn
To make the night for others like the day,
With sorrowing hearts we turn
To seek the place where *our* star past away.

And as we lingering gaze,
A portal seems to open in the sky,
Thro' which, with loving ray,
It smiles to lure us to its home on high.

And so we patient wait,
Till to us also shall the call be given;
And thro' that azure gate
We pass to find "our loved and lost"—in Heaven.

1854.

CLARA.

Ah! why to me, when gentle Spring
Doth far and wide her treasures fling,
Gives each sweet flower that blossometh,
The odor of thy infant breath?

Why are the notes of summer birds
But echoes of thy prattling words?
Why seems each streamlet, murmuring near,
To mock thy merry laughter clear?

When Autumn, in her yearly round,
With tempting fruits bestrews the ground,
Why can their sweetness ne'er eclipse
The kisses of thy cherry lips?

When from the Winter sky of blue
I dream of cherubs gazing through,
Why seems each smiling face divine
A sweet daguerreotype of thine?

Through nature's wide domain, ah! why,
Amid the earth, or sea or sky,
Does all I hear or feel or see
Bring some enrapturing thought of thee?

Ah! well I know from what sweet hour
My heart must date this magic power.
Since first thou wert my joy and pride,
Love hath my senses *clarified.*

1851.

THE BIRD'S RETURN.

[Inscribed to Miss Sue M., of Gallatin, Tennessee, on her return home after a winter's residence in the South.]

Ah! well our hearts remember
How, in the sad November,
We saw thee southward take thy parting flight—
How, thro' the winter dreary,
Thy beauty, bright and cheery,
Departing, left us in a rayless night—

How melody enchanting,
Thy sweet voice sadly wanting,
In silence pined, the live-long winter day—
How every birdling near us
That kindly stayed to cheer us,
In sorrow mourned that thou wert far away.

When Spring to all the bowers
Bro't back the vanished flowers,
In vain we listened for thy well-known voice.
When through the greenwood straying
We wandered forth a-maying,
We missed thee there—sad in the midst of joys.

But Summer, glad returning,
Bro't to our spirits yearning,
All in the pleasant month of rosy June,
Thee—brightest of the treasures,
That fill her golden measures;
At shady noon or 'neath the blushing moon.

Henceforth, oh! never leave us,
Tho' Winter, cold and grievous,
May hover sadly round thy native home—
Tho' bright those southern bowers
Where, 'mid the orange flowers,
Thy golden pinions late were glad to roam:

For hearts that dearly love thee
Have spread a charm above thee,
To guard thy beauteous form from every ill;
And while their love shall charm thee,
No sorrow e'er may harm thee,
'Mid Autumn's gloom or Winter's icy chill.

1851.

THE BLOSSOM AND THE FRUIT.

A blossom sat sighing upon a green tree,
At the close of a beautiful May;
And a tear was bedimming its "bonny blue e'e",
For its beauty was fading away.

Already it felt, springing up in its heart,
A feeling oppressive and new,
And it wept to behold its bright petals depart,
One by one, with the vanishing dew.

And while, on the breath of the sweet morning air,
Its last dying odor it spread,
To Flora, its goddess, with looks of despair,
Complaint it thus bitterly made:—

"Ah! why must my brilliant young petals decay,
Still fresh in their roseate bloom?
Ah! wherefore so fleeting this beautiful May,
The month of the sweetest perfume?

"The musical tone of my playmate, the bee,
The voice of the gay humming-bird,
And the wing of the zephyr, so pleasant to me,
By me must be ever unheard.

"No hope in the future my spirit can cheer;—
'Tis the grave of my earliest bloom.
What eye, overflowing with pity, is near
To weep o'er my desolate tomb?"

It ceased, and a voice on the clear morning air,
Came murmuring, gentle and still:
"Little minion of mine, do not weep in despair,
But thy fate in its beauty fulfill.

"Oh! sweet is the bloom when its petals unfold,
With its eloquent language, though mute:
But sweeter by far, in its purple and gold,
Is the blossom—when changed to the fruit."

. . . . . .

A maiden sat sighing beneath a green tree,
One beautiful morning in May;
And the grief in her eye it was mournful to see,
For her girlhood was passing away.

Already she felt, in her innocent heart,
A feeling oppressive and new;
And she wept that her morning of youth must depart,
Like a faded bloom, laden with dew.

And while in the breath of the odorous air
Her dark tresses hid her in shade,
To the goddess of Youth with a look of despair,
Complaint she thus bitterly made:

"Ah! why must the bloom of my girlhood decay,
Still fresh in its innocent prime?
Ah! wherefore so swiftly are passing away
The delights of my sweet vernal time?

"My playmates have left me with sorrowful brow;
Unknown is their fortune to me.
I seek them in vain where we sported just now,
Through the vale or the blossoming lea.

"The cloud from the future will not disappear—
Does its shadow encircle the tomb?
What eye, overflowing with pity, is near
To weep for my desolate doom?"

She ceased, and a voice, on the fresh vernal air,
Came murmuring gentle and still:—
"Sweet vision of joy, do not weep in despair,
But thy fate in its beauty fulfill.

"Oh! sweet is the maid, when her eloquent face
Is aglow with its innocent life;
But sweeter, by far, in her matronly grace,
Is the maiden, when changed to the wife."

THE DROUTH AND THE RAIN.

The earth was clad in varied bloom,
And redolent of rich perfume
Was all the air of Spring:
While joyous birds, on every tree,
With sweet, entrancing melody
Made hill and valley ring.

The vernal sun his genial ray
Sent down for many a cloudless day,
While yet the fields were green:
But cloudless day and dewless eve
Soon made the earth in sadness grieve,
And changed the verdant scene.

The thirsty land grew brown and dry,
And pitiless the brazen sky
Hung lurid over all.
The trees their fading treasures shed,
And all the forest, withered, dead,
Seemed covered with a pall.

The bubbling spring, the purling rill,
Were silent on the sombre hill—
The fountains all were dry;

And through the thick and murky air
The birds dropped down in mute despair,
And Nature seemed to die.

Then came the rain in gushing showers,
And lo! the thirsty, dying flowers
Looked up and drank and smiled.
The trees put on their brightest green,
And birds renewed, amid the sheen,
Their matins sweet and wild.

The springs beneath the moistened earth
Awoke, and gladly gushing forth,
Ran sparkling o'er the plain.
Nature, revived by their caress,
Looked up in humble thankfulness
To bless kind Heaven for rain.

. . . . . .

A human heart was full of joy;
For happiness, without alloy,
Had all its wishes crowned;
And hopes of pleasure yet to be
Their sweet, entrancing melody
Shed joyously around.

Prosperity its genial ray
Sent down for many a cloudless day,
Still o'er a grateful heart.

But, ah! its light too warmly shone—
The changeful spirit, callous grown,
Bid gratitude depart.

The selfish heart grew hard and cold,
And worldliness and love of gold
Essayed to fill the soul.
Soon gentle piety had fled:
The heavenly graces, withered, dead,
Lost all their sweet control.

The springs of sympathy were dry,
And from the cold, lacklustre eye
No kindly tears were shed.
All holy aspirations now
Sank groveling to the earth below—
The sordid heart was dead!

Then sorrow came—a gushing shower—
And lo! its mild, mysterious power
Subdued the stubborn soul.
Hopes bloomed, that long had dormant lain,
And heavenly graces once again
Usurped their sweet control.

The springs of feeling, now unsealed,
A fount of sympathy revealed,
Bright gushing forth again.
The heart, revived by their caress,
Looked up in humble thankfulness
For sorrow's gracious rain.

TENNESSEE.

Fair State, whom thronging sisters bless,
  Clustering round like maidens gay;
As if, with many a fond caress,
  To hail thee as their Queen of May:

Bright land, thro' which two rivers bright,
  Hasting in ocean homes to dwell,
Turn back to linger with delight
  Awhile 'mid scenes they love so well:

Fain would I join that sister throng
  In fond devoirs about thy throne;
And when they tune their sweetest song,
  Join with it, as of old, my own.

And, like those streams, reluctantly
  Compelled to leave thy fair domain,
I backward turn in memory
  To live my happiest days again;

To visit scenes so loved of yore,
And friends whose hearts beat warm and true;
Or if they beat, alas! no more,
Their love survives beyond the blue.

SONNET.

On the death of my highly esteemed friend, Mrs. Mary E. Thorn Granger, wife of the Rev. Francis Granger of Buffalo, N. Y.

O valued friend, whence came the thrill of pain
I felt when told thy earthly life was o'er?
For I no longer hoped to see thee more,
Nor hear thy soul-inspiring words again,
Till we should meet where death can never reign.
And I am nearing now time's farthest shore,
There to await the ferryman whose oar
Shall waft me also o'er the silent main.

So not for self I weep; nor yet for thee
Amid the joyful rest of Paradise;
But for those nearer ones whose tearful eyes
Thy late familiar form no more may see:—
Most for the lone one whose crushed spirit cries,
Bowed down in sorrow: "O come back to me!"

1892.

HUMOROUS

AND

SATIRICAL.

THE FISHES IN HELICON.

[Respectfully dedicated to the disappointed poets, "amounting in all to more than *seven hundred*," who wrote for the Jennie Lind Prize.]—*By One Who Didn't.*

In the Fountain of Helicon, frisking about,
A shoal of small fishes were busy at play,
Some diving deep downward and some leaping out
To try the thin fluid that over them lay.

The fisherman, Barnum, came trudging along,
O'er his shoulders a fishing rod carelessly thrown.
He would fain try his luck in the waters of song,
And the end of his line with a silver bait shone.

As he gazed at the fish in the fountain of thought,
He coaxingly said in an audible tone,
"Poor fellows! I know you'd all like to be caught,
But I'm sorry to say I've use only for one.

"Whatever best nibbles I'm certain to pull,
And I care little what, so I'm not taken in—
A poet, a fish or a manatee bull—
'Tis no matter which, so he brings me the tin."

Then the bait o'er the fountain he craftily swung,
That the swimmers, below, the temptation might see;
And plainer than e'er could be said by a tongue,
Each eye seemed to say: "Catch me, Barnum, catch me!"

Splash! fell in the water the bawble so nice.
With a rush, helter-skelter, the fishes all came;
And one little fellow, caught up in a trice,
Hung dangling in air on the fish-hook of fame!

1850.

THE EAGLE'S CONQUEST.

[On the triumph of J. Q. Adams, in his impeachment trial in Congress, in 1842.]

An eagle had perched on a towering rock,
Away on a mountain high;
And proudly he stood, as if to mock
The lowly flight of the babbling flock
That fluttered beneath his eye.

And the world was gazing on him there,
In his lofty pride of place;
And loud did its echoing voice declare:
"Behold the lord of the upper air,
The chief of his kingly race!"

But the birds that haunted the air below
Were fired with a jealous hate:
The owl, the hawk and the carrion crow
Resolved their valorous might to show,
And humble his lofty state.

So they *Marshalled* their puny hosts one day,
For a deed of great renown;
And they sallied forth in a dark array
To make the king of the air their prey,
And drag the monarch down.

But, oh! how weak was their boasted might—
How tame their "chivalrous blood!"
All wearied out by so high a flight,
They struggled in vain to reach the height
Where the hated rival stood.

But he of the bold and fiery eye
Beheld them as they came;
And, as the vaunting host drew nigh,
He leisurely poised himself on high
To take a deadlier aim.

He stooped from above his foes to meet,
With his dark, broad wing unfurled;
And he laid them low beneath his feet—
Then rose on high to a loftier seat,
Before the admiring world.

And loudly the shout from land and sea
On the sounding air was heard:
"All hail to the mountain lord so free!
And long may the victor-eagle be
Fair Freedom's guardian bird!"

1842.

INGERSOLL, "MODERN THOUGHT," AND THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

"That majestic stream, supplied from a thousand unfailing fountains, rolls on and will roll forever."—*Judge Black.*

A straw, floating down on the river's tide,
Got caught in an eddy along its side;

And, whirling about in a giddy dream,
'Twas borne for a distance up the stream.

And exulting it cried: "What a wondrous force!
See how I have changed the river's course;"

But there came a rise with the summer rain,
And the eddy swept into the current again.

But the straw was left high and dry on the shore,
And the river flowed on the same as before.

TO THE YOUNG LADY

WHO KINDLY GAVE UP HER ROOM TO ME DURING THE RECENT DIOCESAN CONVENTION AT CEDAR RAPIDS.

A jackdaw gray hopped into the cage
A canary had just vacated;
And he said to himself: "I will now engage
To sing a song shall be all the rage
With ears that are cultivated.

"A spell exists in the golden wires
That voice has thrilled so often,
Which into my wondering soul inspires
New thoughts, new feelings and new desires
That every heart shall soften.

"To breathe the musical atmosphere
That sweetest of throats has breathed in,
Will awaken a melody all shall hear;
And the faces of listeners, far and near,
Bright smiles shall then be wreathed in."

He said—and opened his beak in song;
And his cawing was made to vary
To this short ditty, not over strong,
Whose faults are the daw's, while the merits belong
Alone to the sweet canary.

1883.

AN ASININE ADVISER.*

The Shepherd had built a high wall round the sheep;
For he said: "Tho' my hirelings were base,
And neglected their watch o'er the lambkins to keep,
They'd be safe in this fortified place."

So he went to his summer house, ate, drank and slept,
And thought little more of his lambs;
Nor guessed how the wolf in his craftiness kept
Beguiling the hirelings with shams—

That the wall interfered with his natural right;
For the lambs were but made to be eaten;
That unless the wall fell, there would sure be a fight;
And, in *such* a fight, *he'd* not be beaten.

And the hirelings not only neglected to watch,
But they broke down the wall here and there,
That the wolf might rush in the poor lambkins to catch,
While the sheep bleated loud in despair:

*See note VI.

"Oh! when, and oh! where can we look for relief?
Oh! when will the Shepherd awake?
For the hirelings are leagued with the merciless thief,
And the life of the flock is at stake."

Then an ass poked his head thro' a *hole in the wall*,
And brayed: "For advice, turn to me.
Let us license the wolf; then, whene'er the lambs fall,
The Shepherd gets pay—don't you see?—

"And how precious to know, when your darlings are dead,
They were killed in the manner the law says!"
But the sheep only turned up their noses and said:
"Mr. A., do you take *us* for asses?"

Then he drew back his head, saying: "Well, let it pass.
It is nothing to me if they try it.
The advice is, of course, the advice of an ass;
But I make lots of provender by it."

EPIGRAMS.

I.

TO G. D. PRENTICE.

Apollo, consenting to teach thee his trade,
Has met with a woeful disaster;
For the works of the god are now left in the shade—
The 'Prentice surpasses the master!

1851.

II.

ON A PAIR OF EYES BELONGING TO MISS P. OF BALTIMORE.

The fluttering heart it frenzies
Those burning orbs to view-
Two double convex lenses
Which an ardent soul shines through:
And like the tinder lighted
Beneath the focal ray,
Quick is the heart ignited
That feels their potent sway.

1850.

THE PAIR TREE.

I found, as I strayed through the Garden of Youth
In the spring-time, a beautiful tree,
Whose blossoms—love, innocence, beauty and truth—
Were all sweetly budding for me.
Both summer and winter I cherished it well,
And fondly I gave it my name:
And lo! its fair blossoms ne'er faded or fell,
But flourished forever the same!

I sat in its shadow by day—and by night
I slept 'neath its sheltering boughs;
And I talked to its whispering leaves with delight,
And paid it my earliest vows.
Its whispering leaves seemed to listen with pride,
And murmured low words in reply;
Smiling sweet as the lips of a bonny young bride—
That I kissed them 'twere vain to deny!

Its fragrance could charm all my sorrow away,
And heighten to rapture my joy;
And while in its soft, loving shadow I lay,
No care could my spirit annoy.
And now, as I gaze on my blossoming tree,
Still flourishing, lovely and fair—
O! joy, 'mid the sweet scented branches to see—
It has borne me a beautiful pair.

1851.

THE CROQUET BALL.

[Read at a "Croquet Party" given during the summer of 1871, to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the birth-day of Mr. George Josselyn, Architect of the Asylum for the Insane, at Independence, Iowa.]

Just fifty years ago to-day,
In a tropical island far away,
A ball, in the game of life's Croquet,
Sent by its destined ricochet,—
A Josselyn wonderment—was hurled
Into this crowded, jostlin' world.

But here this strange and wondrous ball
At first was tenderly treated by all;
For they feared, if knocked, so puny and small,
'Twould bring on the island a terrible squall.
Too tender for even the gentlest bumps,
Some gave it tosses, but none gave it thumps.

Till bigger and harder and rounder grown,
And strong enough to "go it alone,"
'Twas brought from its shelter and placed in the van,
And the rougher play of the game began.

Then none were too tender to give it a hit;
For all knew well 'twas of genuine grit.
'Twas hit in earnest and hit in fun,
By knocks now gentle, and now overdone.
But, whatever the force by which 'twas hit,
No "splitting stroke" its fibre could split:
And though the player had little wit,
He never could make a "booby" of it:
And whether tight or loose croqueted,
Nor "loose" nor "tight" could it ever be made.
'Twas hit by friends and hit by foes—
Not harder by these than often by those.
'Twas sometimes hit by way of defence,
And sometimes, too, by mallets prepense.
But, however 'twas hit, its click said plain:
"Who cares for that? Just hit me again.
Hit me hard and hit me fair,
And I'll show a thing will make you stare."

And so, with a hit from destiny,
It bounded, "a rover," over the sea.
And first upon the Belgian strand,
And then in the German Fatherland,
It took its part in the strange old game
For which to the earth's great ball it came.
And after awhile, another stroke
From destiny's mallet its vigor awoke,
And it leaped again, o'er the ocean wave,
To the land of the free and the home of the brave:
And like other wanderers, year by year,
It found, well-pleased, an *asylum* here.

And proud are we that, on our ground,
The highest joy of the game it found:
For hither the player Hymen came,
Who's famous for playing the "two ball game."
And he joined to our ball a fairer one,
And vowed, till the game of life was done,
He'd keep them together thro' shine and shower,
For the crowning joy of victory's hour.

And so each wicket together they make,
Two happy martyrs approaching "the stake,"
To die in the flame that made them blest,
And be wafted therein to the Land of Rest—
Enraptured to know that the game of love
Will be played on a brighter field above.

JANUARY AND MAY.

[On the 28th of April, 1854, snow fell to the depth of five or six inches, and it had not entirely disappeared on the 1st of May.]

As fresh from the South-land the blossoming May
Came laden with flowers our groves to adorn,
An octogenarian, wrinkled and gray,
Cast over her pathway a shadow forlorn.

"What! you, Gaffer Winter," she laughingly said,
Tho' filled, the meanwhile, with a shuddering fear,
"What! you with your snowbeard? I heard you were dead,
And came with fresh blossoms to sprinkle your bier."

"Ha! ha!" laughed old Winter exultingly then—
"I've thought myself dying, this fortnight or more;
But your beauty has roused my cold pulses again,
And brought back the thoughts that I cherished of yore.

"You sprinkle my grave with fresh garlands in sooth!—
But, fairest of nymphs, I'm too happy to chide.
You have waked in my heart the sweet passion of youth,
And, willing or no, I shall make you my bride."

So he seized, in his icicle arms, the young May,
And spread with snow kisses her warm, blushing face:
But the graybeard in happiness melted away,
And expired in the joy of that glowing embrace.

THE CASTLE.

There stood an old castle, frowning dread,
Thro' the darkened atmosphere,
And casting a black and baleful shade,
That mildew-blight and ruin spread
O'er the nations far and near.

'Twas slowly tottering to its fall,
And waning its terrible frown;
And the voice of good men, one and all,
Was heard in a loud, impatient call:
"Let the Castle of Wrong come down!"

But one poor lunatic, weak and blind,
Grieved sorely, night and day,
To think how its mouldering walls declined;
And he sought some firm support to find
The tottering pile to stay.

So here a crumbling pillow he propped,
And there an arch decayed,
With rotten reeds that were hastily cropped,
Ere one by one they silently dropped
In a dank and marshy glade.

And then he smiled with an idiot smile,
To think he had made it strong;
And he set him down to rest awhile
Beneath the shade of the grim old pile,
And shouted loud and long:—

"Ho! ye who have eyes, for I have not,
Come, see my glorious fane.
It stands in a brave, time-honored spot;
And beauty springs up in its shade, as thought
Springs up in my teeming brain."

But the winds of truth too stoutly blew,
And shattered its arches old;
And its arches old, creaked through and through:
And the lunatic strained his eyes to view
What his eyes could ne'er behold.

Like a withered, tempest-shaken ash,
It reeled and swayed awhile;
Then fell to the earth with a horrible crash—
And the purblind lunatic, weak and rash,
Was buried beneath the pile.

1850.

THE ULTRAISTS.

[The adage, "Extremes meet," illustrated by a fable founded on fact.]

Two mortal enemies
Met, once upon a time, but not to fight;
For though their "dander riz,"
A mutual loathing turned their heels in flight.

O! ye who saw them flee,
Think not this flight their valor doth impeach;
It was their aim, you see,
From each, in haste, the farthest point to reach.

But soon—O! strange to tell—
Since both fled opposite, o'er lands and seas,
With direful shock they fell
Foul of each other at th' antipodes!

There, true Kilkenny cats,
They mingled desperate in a bloody fray!
While we, good-natured rats,
Sworn foes of both, prayed both might win the day.

And so they did and more;
For both so fiercely fought with tooth and nail,
That, when the fight was o'er,
All that remained of each was this *short tale.*

1850.

THE DISCONTENTED DOG.

"What can ail the mastiff bitch?"—*Coleridge.*

Round about the kennel howling,
Snapping, snarling, barking, growling—
Driving sleep from North and South—
She has got so cross and crabbed,
Uncle Sam, she's going rabid:
Put a muzzle on her mouth!

All your noble hounds were dozing,
And their straightened limbs reposing
For the morrow's glorious chase;
But her peevish vigil keeping,
She disturbed their quiet sleeping,
Leaving Rest no resting place.

Others catch the mad infection;
Or, to give their ears protection,
Fall to yelping roundly too;
But, if you could keep *her* quiet,
Soon would cease the noisy riot,
And the night wear calmly through.

But it is her highest glory
Evermore to vex and bore ye
  With her baying at the moon;
And a secret satisfaction
Finds she in her wild distraction—
  Raving, "crazy as a loon!"

Let her out—if that is proper
As the only way to stop her;—
  Jehu! See her "r'ar and pitch!"
Tie the creature with a log chain:
She would break a common dog chain.—
  "What *can* ail the mastiff bitch?"

1850.

UNCLE SAM'S ALARM,

OR A NEW WAY TO EXTINGUISH A FIRE.

Uncle Sam was calmly snoozing
In his bed one summer night,
When the cry of "Fire!" awoke him
In a terrible affright.
Donning his unmentionables,
Rushing forth in wild amaze—
Lo! his own proud mansion burning!
Half the roof was in a blaze.

Sees he there the neighbors gathered
From the workshops and the farms;

Some with ladders, some with buckets,
Some with idly folded arms.
Shouts he to his sturdy firemen—
Ho! bring out my engines four!—
North, South, East, West, make them ready;
Quick the floods of water pour!

Then were heard the clanging fire-bells,
Mingled voices, rattling wheels;
Then was felt the proud emotion
Which the firemen only feels,
When upon his perilous duty
Heart and eye and hand intent,
He is owned the gallant master
Of the raging element.

Soon the engines took their stations,
Stretching out the suction hose.
For a full supply of water
Each a separate cistern chose.

One sucked up the broad Atlantic,
  One the Gulf of Mexico,
One the golden-shored Pacific,
  One the blue Ontario.

While they made the preparations,
  And the flame still mounted higher,
Uncle Sam espied the villains
  Who had set his house a-fire.
Still, with mock pretense of saving,
  They were pouring floods of oil:
Hoping from the conflagration,
  They might seize a golden spoil.

Grief and horror for a moment
  Every motion paralyzed,
When the mercenary wretches,
  By the light, he recognized—
When he knew they were the ingrates
  Who had at his table fed;

Whom that burning roof had sheltered—
Who had slept upon his bed!

Then his eye, with fury blazing,
Thrilled each coward heart with fear,
And his voice of echoing thunder
Shook the Western Hemisphere:
"Down with the incendiaries!—
Curses on each crazy elf!
Turn your engines on the scoundrels!—
Let the fire go out itself!"

'Twas a word the gallant firemen
With a right good will obeyed;
And the now impatient engines
With unwonted spirit played.
Ha! the deluge overtakes them,
As the traitors turn to flee!—
Such a motley scatteration
Neptune would have laughed to see.

By the rushing tide thrown headlong,
Sprawling on the earth they lay:
To regain an upright standing
Oft they vainly did essay;
For, when half erect, a torrent
More impetuous than before,
All relentless dashing o'er them,
Ducked them in the mud once more.

Rising, falling, plunging, floundering,
Giving forth lugubrious cries;
With the water (of the engines)
Falling from their weeping eyes,
They, 'mid hisses, jeers and laughter,
Pointing fingers, swinging hats,
Crept into their hiding places
Like a troop of drowning rats.

. . . . .

Lo! the fire had ceased its burning,
And the stars were shining calm,
When the firemen home departed
With three cheers for Uncle Sam.
When the sun rose o'er the mansion
Not a trace of fire remained;
Save, perhaps, *the southeast corner*
Was with smoke a *leetle* stained!

1851.

THE SPRING POET.

The robin sings: "I'd sing,
Though on earth was no such thing
As an ear to hear or a tongue to cheer
My song in the joy of spring.

"But to mine, and one more heart
My songs rich joy impart:
So the critic ass may go to grass,
And practice his only art.

"If 'the jay, the rook, the daw,'
With a hoarse and croaking caw,
Should ridicule and call me fool,
I'd drown their coarse guffaw

"With a gayer, louder song;
So gay, so loud and strong,
That they fain would flee from the nest and the tree
That to me and my mate belong.

"So, human poets! sing
Like me your delight in Spring;
And if fools should croak till they strangle and choke,
The wise their thanks would bring."

1890.

BATTLEDOOR AND SHUTTLECOCK.

Merry-hearted maidens four
Laughing, play at battledoor;
And my heart, the shuttlecock,
To and fro they nimbly knock.

Maggie, Fannie, Hattie, Kate—
How their bright eyes scintillate.
As the poor, bewildered thing
Back and forth they gaily fling.

Ha! 'tis lodged in Fannie's hair—
Scarce a moment nestles there,
When away it bounding flies,
Lighting plump in Hattie's eyes.

Now in Katie's kerchief hides;
Then, abashed and blushing glides
(Battledoor is full of slips)
Bouncing straight to Maggie's lips.

Merry-hearted maidens four,
Playing thus at battledoor,
Cease, oh! cease, my heart to knock,
Poor, bewildered shuttlecock!

NOTES.

NO. I.

THERE ARE BIRDS THAT REMAIN WHEN THE WINTER IS HERE, p. 14.

These lines were written in Tennessee, where a few song birds remain the entire winter. Among the rest, a species of wren, which often sings most cheerfully when the weather is most gloomy.

NO. II.

THE SINKING STREAMLET, p. 16.

It is well known that, in the South, streams of considerable size often fall into what are called *sink-holes*, and entirely disappear.

NO. III.

ALL ON A PLEASANT SUMMER DAY, p. 36.

In Tennessee, where these lines were written, the martins return in April.

NO. IV.

SPEAKING THE SATIN LATIN OF HER LAND, p. 45.

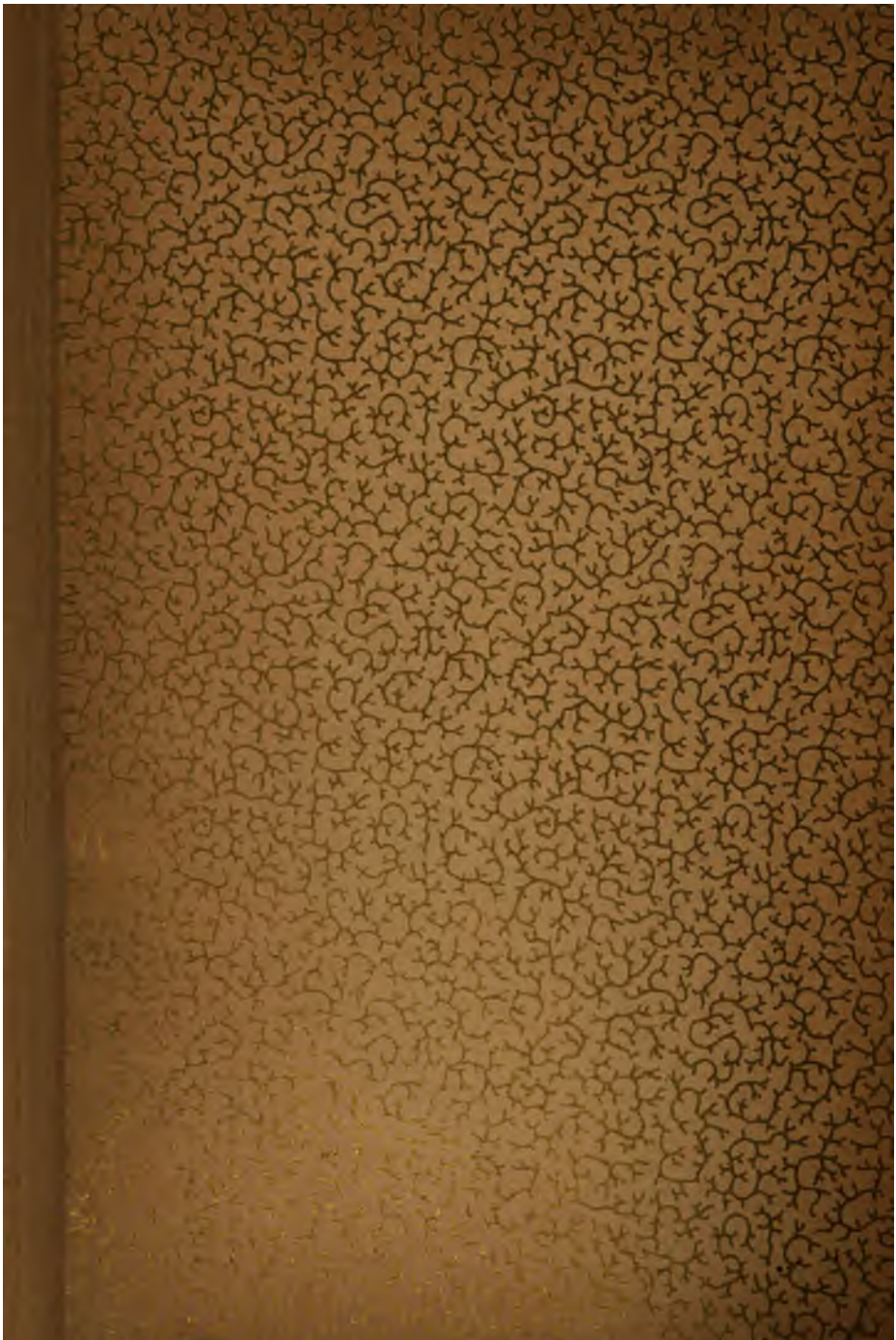
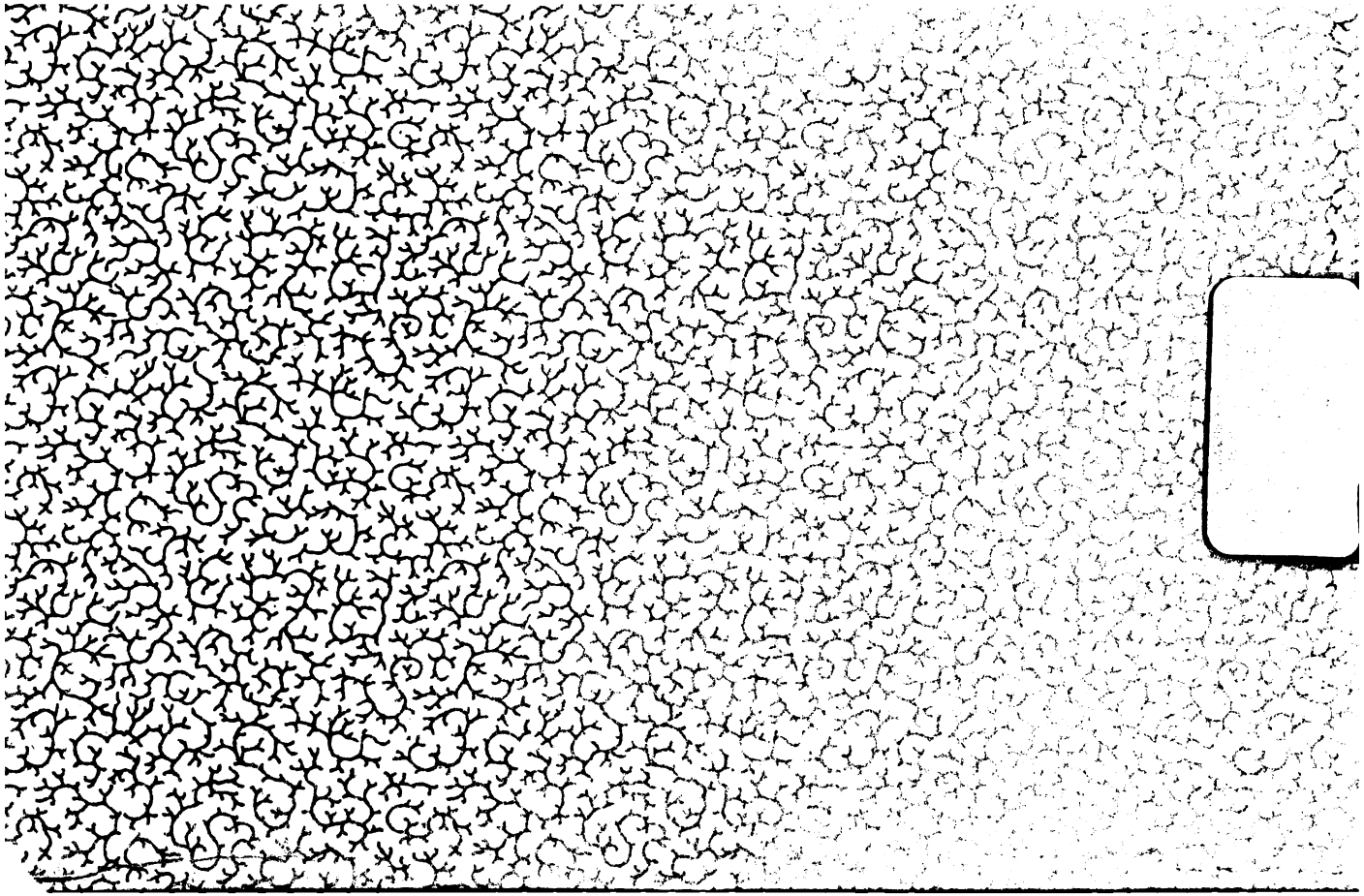
Lord Byron calls the Italian "a sort of bastard Latin,
That sounds as if it should be writ on satin."

NO. V.

ANTELINDIAN, p. 52.

Between the dates attached to this poem and the one following, I heard Jenny Lind, in Nashville, Tennessee. If any of my lady friends should say of these two pieces that "they're too enthusiastic for anything," I should reply: Yes—"for anything" *except* Jenny Lind's singing.

NO. VI.

AN ASININE ADVISER, p. 160.

The Dubuque (Iowa) *Times*, in which this poem first appears, thus speaks of it: "It is a very effective satire on the idea which Senator ——— has originated, that license is demanded, 'not for the relief of the law-defying majorities, but of the law-abiding minorities' in the rum-ridden cities of Iowa."